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NEW WORLD BOOKS

by JOHN LEWIS

Socialism and the Individual

A contribution to
the great debate of our
times on the problem
of human freedom
under capitalism
and under socialism



NEW WORLD BOOKS

BY THE SAME AUTHOR:
Man and Evolution

Socialism and the Individual

by John Lewis

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For
Andy

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PREFACE

THE GREAT debate of our times, which is not only being thrashed out in the clash of arguments and the Cold War, but lies behind the menacing preparations for armed conflict, is usually presented as the conflict between those who value human freedom above everything else and those who are prepared to sacrifice it for political ends, between those who regard human personality as the supreme value and those who subordinate the individual to the state.

But this is not a real issue, because the Marxist does not in fact take up this position. As is so frequently the case in such discussions, the Marxist point of view is represented in the terms it would have *if* his critics held it; that is, not in its own terms, but *after* translation into the terms of another and opposed theory has taken place.

The real issue is whether individualism or socialism shows more concern for the individual in practice. Those who reject socialism because of its alleged disregard of the individual sentimentalize a great deal about his sacred person, his potentialities, his freedom, his opportunity, but in fact allow him to be turned loose in the rat-race of the modern world to devour or be devoured. On the other hand it is the contention of socialists that it is because they are so deeply concerned about the individual that they are determined to replace a competitive by a cooperative form of society. To

make the individual sacred it is necessary to destroy the social system which crucifies him.

It is realized by all sensible people that freedom is never absolute but must sometimes be limited, not only in order to secure the freedom of others but to achieve a more worthwhile freedom even for the individual concerned. But what is seldom realized is that this truth becomes meaningful only when it is translated into the claim of socialism to achieve for all individuals this fuller freedom, and the repudiation by socialists of capitalism as essentially destructive of human personality.

Socialists, therefore, do not accept the concern of capitalists and individualists at their face value.

It is the contention of this book that the Western world is less successful in achieving this freedom than is generally supposed, while the Socialist world is limiting certain freedoms to enlarge others, and in particular to enlarge the scope of freedom to include millions to whom it has hitherto been denied. Moreover, within socialism we find an inner dynamic moving towards the further transformation of the earlier and more rigorously disciplined forms of socialism into a higher form of socialism which may be called communism, in which alone the freedom we aim at and the all-round development of the individual is achieved, "the system in which people act in fulfilment of social obligations without any special apparatus of coercion."¹

This difference in the choice of paths to freedom rests on a more fundamental difference—that between freedom through

economic individualism and freedom through cooperation. It is the contention of socialists that economic individualism leads ultimately to the negation of both freedom and the individual, while the cooperative commonwealth with its responsibilities and obligations makes for real freedom and real individuality. This is the real clash of ideologies, of philosophies, in the modern world, the real difference between individualism and socialism.

A true revolution is never content with attacking and overthrowing the political and social institutions of the order which it seeks to supplant, but attacks at their root the values on which the moral authority of that order rests and calls in question its ideals, thus shaking the self-confidence of the defenders of that order and sapping their faith in the sincerity and efficiency of their basic principles.

Socialism has attacked not only the economic system of capitalism but its whole moral basis. It has charged that its concern for individual and property rights is little more than a justification of privilege, and its preaching of humility and obedience a soporific for the poor. It has challenged the liberal ideas of liberty, equality, and fraternity, not because it rejects these principles, but because in our Western world liberty has meant little more than the removal of restrictions on money-making, and equality has meant mainly equality before the law won from an earlier age which denied it. As to fraternity, this high-sounding ideal can mean very little in a society based on economic competition and racial exploitation.

Socialism not only criticizes the ethics of capitalism, it advances its own. It claims to speak in the name of all oppressed groups and classes. It claims that all previous movements of reform were movements of minorities or in the interests of minorities. The proletarian movement is the conscious movement of the immense majority in the interest of the immense majority. It declares that its rejection of individualism implies no neglect to the rights of the individual. On the contrary it reconciles them with the interests of the collectivity. The fullest satisfaction can be given to these individual interests only by a socialist society. Moreover a socialist society alone presents a solid guarantee for the protection of the individual. Economic individualism on the other hand can only have the effect of maintaining minority privileges and effectually depriving the majority of their real rights as individuals.

To this challenge the defenders of Western capitalism have made a vigorous reply, asserting that their society alone regards human personality as sacred and respects the rights of man; accusing Communists of complete disregard of these rights and of sacrificing the individual to the claims of the state.

This does not make the problem an easy one, but it brings the real issues into focus, and thus makes possible a discussion which may clarify the great debate of our times.

I. THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE STATE

SOCIALISM AND THE STATE

ANY THEORY of the state and society, no matter how wide its field of reference, rests ultimately on and follows from some theory of the nature of the individual, if only on a denial that there is an individual.

"The first premise of all human history is, of course, the existence of living human individuals. Thus the first fact to be established is the physical organization of these individuals and their consequent relation to the rest of nature. . . . The fact is, therefore, that definite individuals who are productively active in a definite way enter into definite social and political relations."¹

Therefore the premises of the Marxist method of approach "are men, not in any fantastic isolation or abstract definition, but in their actual, empirically perceptible process of development under definite conditions."

If, on the other hand, the individual is regarded in "abstract isolation," quite a different theory of the state and society emerges, as is also the case if the individual is regarded as no more than a cell in the collective whole, the view that is usually attributed to Karl Marx, but which all Marxists repudiate.

Socialism, and especially Marxist socialism, has indeed frequently been denounced for its disregard of the rights of the person, who is to be sacrificed to a higher entity—the state—whose freedom is denied him, and who is destined to become a mere cog in a vast impersonal machine. “The aim of communism,” says Aldous Huxley, “is to deprive the individual of every right, every vestige of personal liberty, including the liberty of thought, and the right to possess a soul, and to transform him into a component of the great Collective Man.”

The assumption is that there is an explicit theory of society which asserts this, a theory which socialists profess and defend. No such socialist or Marxist theory exists. No references to socialist writings are ever advanced to substantiate these assertions, nor indeed would it be possible to find any.

The plain fact is that, on the contrary, socialism aims at the emancipation of the individual; it desires to set him free from the crippling and degrading forces of modern capitalism, to open to him, for the first time in history, the fullest opportunity for the development of his personality. It desires to rescue men from the pitiable, fragmentary, self-divided society in which they find themselves. The basic assumption is the dignity and worth of human personality and the goal of socialism is the maximum possibility of each individual freely developing his own potentialities, the fulfilment of his unlimited capacities for knowledge, enjoyment and creation.

Marxism does not, therefore, regard society as a higher

entity to which the individual must be subordinated, nor does it equate society and the state. Man is a social animal and exists and develops in a system of social relationships with its obligations, its benefits, its reciprocity and interests, and its strong feelings of mutual interdependence. But there is no over-soul, no collective or group mind.

For Marxists "the state" is not synonymous with society, but has a special meaning. It is "an organ of class domination," it operates through the army, the police, the state bureaucracy and judiciary. In its capitalist form it has to be broken up, and then the instruments of state power will be used to crush counter-revolution and to guide the mass of the population in the work of organizing socialist economy. But this is only a temporary phase, and eventually the state in this form will wither away. Now whether this theory is accepted or not, and whether the state, in this sense, is or is not in process of withering away in socialist countries, it cannot be asserted that Marxism teaches that the individual exists only to serve a higher entity. The state, in the Marxist sense, exists only as the instrument for the introduction and furtherance of socialism, while socialism exists only to further the interests of individuals organized in society.

Marxists believe that this cannot be achieved by appealing to the goodwill of the community as a whole, because the class interests of the privileged minority will never permit this minority to accept the view that these interests are incompatible with those of society. But, on the other hand, the interests of the working class *require* the ending of

private ownership, a condition, however, which is essential not only for its own welfare, but for that of society as a whole. Hence the struggle between capitalists and workers is the struggle for a higher form of society. On the one side, each for himself, men as means to profits and as appendages to the machine; on the other side, men as the end and goal of production, guided by the principle of the maximum satisfaction of the needs of all the members of society.

Socialism is, therefore, a body of theory and a set of far-reaching practices explicitly committed to the end of developing the richness of individual character and personality. But it holds that the only way in which this can be done is by repudiating the individualist creed, which seeks the welfare of the individual by setting him free to pursue his own interests (so long as he does not directly interfere with the same liberty for others). It is the contention of socialists that this does not, as the early theorists of *laissez faire* believed, lead to "the greatest happiness of the greatest number," but creates social injustices and blind irrational forces which frustrate and ultimately destroy the individual and produce the greatest *unhappiness* of the large majority of the human race.

Rejecting the creed of individualism, the socialist believes that both individual and social happiness can only be achieved by the planned utilization of resources for the common good, which requires of course the common ownership both of the land and its products and of industry. While

under capitalism these are privately owned and operated only for profit, under socialism they are socially owned and operated for use. Socialists believe that it is only under such a system that the individual finds his real freedom and the fullest opportunity for personal development.

THEORY AND PRACTICE

Let us remind ourselves of what is under discussion at this stage in the argument. We are not at this point discussing how far socialist principles or individualist principles are consistently followed in practice by those who profess them. We shall come to that extremely important question in due course. We have first to get clear as to what these principles, in each case, are; and since it is frequently declared that socialism is a theory which regards the individual as of no account except in so far as he subserves some higher entity, the state, it is essential before going any further to deal with this basic question of theory.

It would be proper, if we were discussing Christianity, to consider its basic theological position—the existence of God, the theory of the Incarnation—without immediately raising the question of whether these views were inconsistent with Christian practice. Christian apologists rightly resent the diversion of such an argument by some muddle-headed or unscrupulous controversialist to a squabble about the iniquities of Pope Borgia or the immoral practices of monks

and nuns, or by sliding off into an attack on the Inquisition, the salaries of Bishops, or the slum property owned by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

These are all interesting and important questions, and in due course they must be dealt with, but questions of basic theory must be considered independently of the extent to which that theory is put into practice by those who believe it. If Christians do not practice their Christianity that is not necessarily a criticism of Christianity but of the Christians, and the conclusion to be drawn might be not that they should abandon their Christian ideal, but that they should be better Christians. As Chesterton once said, "The historical tragedy of Christianity may not mean that Christianity has been tried and has failed, but that it has been found difficult and not tried at all."

It is no doubt the case that the practice of Communists also sometimes falls short of their theory. This, however, is no argument against the theory; but it may well be a serious criticism of the Communists.

Let us then first deal with the basic question of socialist and individualist theory.

STATE ABSOLUTISM

We have asserted that socialism is not a theory which subordinates the individual to a higher entity, the state. Now there *are* such theories, but so far from being socialist theories they will be found in every case to justify some form of caste

or class society, some form of privilege. All statist or totalitarian systems, such as those of Hegel and his followers, regard the state as an organism or entity with its own personality, or collective mind, which has an intrinsic value far greater than the individuals comprised within it. The state has no obligations to its members or to any other state or race, and individual rights are only recognized in so far as they are implied in the rights of the state, so that the liberty of the individual coincides perfectly with obedience to the state.

In flat opposition to such theories, socialism holds that the individual is the end and society the means, not the state the end and individuals the means, while the common good is not the good of some entity separate from and above individuals, but, in the words of Marx and Engels, "an association in which the free development of each is the condition of the free development of all."²

Theories which exalt the state draw a sharp distinction between an elite and a permanently subordinate mass whose function it is to serve and obey and not to rule. This is a view which frequently finds, in this country as well as elsewhere, justification in "the hereditary inequality of human beings." Such theories usually claim to be based on an eternal order of truth and righteousness in which each class finds its appropriate station and its duties.

Theories which in this way regard the state as absolute have played an important part in history since Plato first defended a class society in *The Republic*.

The authoritarian conception appears in the medieval theory of an hierarchical social order, and absolutism is the basis of Prussianism and the corporate state of fascism.

THE TOTALITARIAN STATE

Plato, for all his brilliant logic and profound insight into the problems of man and society, is no supporter of equality or democracy. *The Republic* is a conservative political tract—it is also many other more admirable things—designed to promote a static, rigid, caste society. The city, says Plato, is greater than the individual, who is created for the sake of the whole and not the whole for the sake of the individual. Within this whole, the different individuals, with their natural inequalities, must render their specific and very unequal services. In his ideal Republic, “the highest form of the state,” “everything possible has been achieved in the direction of utterly eradicating everything from our life that is private and individual.”³

For Plato, the criterion of morality is the interests of the state. Morality is nothing but political hygiene. The highest virtue is to keep one's allotted place in society and mind one's own business. This, he argues, is the real meaning of “justice.”⁴ *Men must be taught that justice is inequality.*⁵ Therefore the worst thing that can happen to the state is for the workers, whom he calls the “iron” men, to meddle with politics, which should be the exclusive privilege of their betters, the men of “gold.”

Hegel taught that the state was the incarnation of the state-creating nation, it was the spirit of the people itself. There could be no ethical ideal above the state, and in relation to other states there could be no overriding moral law—in other words it was exempt from morality.

It is in the completely organized and rational state, he argues, that the individual has and enjoys his freedom. But man is not asked to create such a state, to fashion history; all that he can do is to *express* it, to recognize the greater whole of which we are already a part. Who are we to question the logic of the universe?

This is not Marxism, for even if man as a social being does find his freedom in fellowship and not in isolation, it is not in society as such, in any society, that this is so. Acceptance of one's place in a class society is, for the worker, the acceptance of exploitation. For the Marxist the just society has to be created and can only be created by victory in class struggle. Man is essentially the maker of his own history and not merely a cog recognizing his place in a pre-existent mechanism.

Hegel's followers, both in Britain and Germany, carried even farther than Hegel himself the complete subordination of the individual to the requirements of the existing class society, that is to say to the requirements of the ruling class. Bosanquet (1848–1923), the British Hegelian, taught philosophy at Oxford and at St. Andrews in the period when idealism was the most influential philosophy in both English and Scottish universities. He too proclaimed the idea of

wholeness—reality was the all-embracing individual whole, of which the parts possess degrees of reality in proportion as they mirror the whole, a theory expressing a vast satisfaction with existing society. All moral action should be governed by the will of the whole; and, for the individual, the center of gravity is thrown outside him, that is to say outside his own private interests, his needs and his desires. Gratification of individual wants has to give way before duties to the whole, and from the standpoint of the individual evil and suffering will be permanent in the world (since they are necessary for the good of the state). Here is an ideology which prepares the individual for more labor and less enjoyment, a slogan for authoritarian economies.

Such an eternal order of truth and righteousness is plainly just the ground on which to base existing property relations, if these are what you want to defend. You can give them in this way a moral and legal justification, no matter how iniquitous they may otherwise appear.

In Germany, Fichte (1762–1814), in his *Addresses to the German Nation*, played an important part in the rapid development of German nationalism and later in the propaganda of the Nazi movement. He declared that the individual had no genuine existence or value as a separate entity, should set no limit whatever to his sacrifices for the sake of the nation, and should admit no purpose of his own, but yield absolutely to the purposes of the state.

Between the wars, German philosophy played an increas-

ingly important part in building up the ideology of Nazism. In *The War Against the West* Aurel Kolnai gives an account of some 178 German and Austrian philosophers, mostly writing after 1930, who taught in one form or another the doctrine of the absolute state. Most of these derived from Hegel but all exaggerated the worst elements in Hegel and omitted his dialectic of social change. Thus Othmar Spann regarded capitalist society as a balanced, rational whole, based on a permanent class system, stabilizing, perpetuating and legitimizing economic inequality by philosophical deduction. Here is the perfect charter for the servile society based on the elaboration of Hegel's totalitarian doctrine after cleansing it of its historical dialectic with its revolutionary implications.

CHURCH AND STATE

Not only do philosophies provide ideological support for class societies. The Catholic Church supported the feudal order, with its stratification of society into Workers, Fighters and Prayers, by a theology and an ecclesiastical system which gave it strong supernatural and emotional backing.

Protestantism has played a similar role. In our day this is notably the case in South Africa where belief in a Divine Order of this type, says Dr. Diederichs, the Afrikaaner philosopher, is the only thing which will hold back the drive towards racial equality. "A world that has lost all sense of

the Absolute will finally do away with all differences and dividing lines between men and will lead to equality, leveling and the destruction of distinctions."⁶

The Dutch Reformed Church, the official Church of the Afrikaners, puts the same philosophy into religious terms. It sees the state as "born of God" with "authority indivisible." It rejects popular sovereignty and the general franchise. It excludes from the state "immature communities" and "those in rebellion against God," i.e., the unorthodox, the liberals, the humanists and the socialists. It justifies segregation as "an ordainment of God." The black man is to be the hewer of wood and drawer of water, his only place is on his knees—except in the white man's church.*

TOWARDS THE SERVILE STATE

Something in effect very like the statist conception has developed from what would appear to be its opposite. The competitive individualism of the nineteenth century has developed into the monopoly capitalism of the twentieth century. In this form all these features of statism to which individualism is most strongly opposed have appeared. For a time efforts were made in the United States to break up the trusts, and from a theoretical point of view monopoly was regarded as a departure from social principles. But in the capitalist world monopoly has come to stay and the

* Some sections of the Reformed Church have recently slightly modified this extreme position.

ideology of capitalism must therefore come into line with economic requirements.

It is this that accounts for the appearance of state absolutism in the very home of rugged individualism. Contemporary American social theory not only fully accepts monopoly but sees it as rapidly taking over the functions of the state, whose powers must be severely curtailed. In fact the United States is to be run in future not by the legislature but by big business;⁷ and the state must cease to interfere with the normal working of the economy, as it has done in the past by taxation designed to redistribute incomes and other welfare projects. The individual must get rid of the idea of the providential state and accept the notion of a spontaneous, unimpeded and uncontrolled functioning of the social system.

Professor C. Wright Mills⁸ developed this theme to show that a conjunction of historical circumstances has led to the rise of an elite of power, consisting of the chiefs of the great monopolies, the politicians and, today, the generals. The men of these circles now make the key decisions, and these decisions carry more consequences for more people than has ever been the case in the history of mankind. Below them we find not the alert politically conscious voters of the "free world," but a mass-like society which has little resemblance to the image of a society in which public discussion and individual responsibility are the foundations of political power.

This elite commands instruments of rule unsurpassed in world history, including complete command of the publicity

machine—the press and radio. This class is not the result of a competitive struggle which brings, in each generation, the ablest competitors to the top. Mills shows how few of the great business tycoons have worked their way to power by industry, enterprise, and merit. Ninety-three percent of the very rich have inherited their money, only seven percent have risen from below. They like to believe that they are a superior caste, says Mills, but they are not remarkable for their culture, their scientific training, their ethical standards, or their sense of social responsibility. They are merely the lucky winners in a society in which money and money values are supreme. And of course it is money which allows the economic power of its possessors to be translated directly into politics.

This is justified on the conventional and classical ground that what is good for the capitalist is good for us all—the “invisible hand,” the pre-established harmony of capitalist and social interests, will see to it that “what is good for General Motors is good for the United States.” This doctrine serves as an ingenious moral device, invoked in perfect sincerity by privileged groups, in order to justify and maintain their dominant position.

THE DEMOCRATIC HERESY

But what in fact happens to the individual in such a society? There is no “free market economy” of opinions, of open debate. Great issues are neither raised nor decided by

the public at large. One of the most powerful agencies of the power elite is "the opinion business" which manipulates the public for hire, with the intention of making public opinion a mere reaction following exposure to the mass media. Only cost limits the deflection of public opinion in any direction on any topic. The individual is conditioned as regards his ideals and aspirations and the models of conduct he comes to admire, he is deprived of the knowledge required for judgment, he thinks in stereotypes, and dare accept nothing which disturbs his loyalties and beliefs as these have been inculcated by school and propaganda.

Thus it is that the powerful rule without men knowing it, this is how, in a professedly open society, they get the authority of democracy behind them. In the face of this there is something ironical in the superior attitude of democratic rectitude from which Soviet methods of government are condemned as depriving the individual of his rights and responsibilities, for the United States is ruled by naked and arbitrary power, cloaked in the ponderous platitudes and liberal rhetoric of a democratic age long superseded by the power elite.

The hierarchy of classes characteristic of the great state is becoming more and more of a reality in the very country which still boasts that the able man can rise from log cabin to White House.

"We are consigning tens of millions of our people to fixed roles in life where aspiration is futile," says Vance Packard in *The Status Seekers*.⁹ "We don't even allow them the satis-

faction of feeling secure, dignified and creative in their low status. And socially we look down upon them. Because of this frustration and isolation, we have a frightful shattering of integrity. This shows up in the fantastically high delinquency and crime rates among the young of America."

The revolt from democracy has become more and more open and explicit in recent years. Walter Lippmann¹⁰ is convinced that the only hope is to turn back from the error of popular government to the basic rights and authority of the ruling minority. Under no circumstances must government be put in a position where it has to give way to popular pressure. The power of the executive can be enfeebled to the verge of impotence by the demands of representative bodies and mass opinion.

WHO IS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL?

It is in these ways, and not in any form of socialism, that the theory of the state as the supreme being and authority finds expression in our time. The upshot is what has been called the *servile state* in which the lower orders do their duty "in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call them," in which democracy is either eliminated or severely curtailed, and in which the interests of the state turn out to be the interests of a privileged minority.

Socialism rejects statism in all its forms, but it also rejects individualism. It believes that neither form of society secures the full development of human personality. Individ-

ualism not only sets man against man in the competitive system of modern commercialism, but itself moves inevitably towards monopoly.

There is for Marxism no value above the free development of personality and this is its basic aim. The social organization exists only to secure for each individual economic security, health, education, and the development of whatever special aptitudes he may have.

This is, without doubt, the professed aim of all socialists and many others besides. The point, however, is not to secure agreement as to the end but to discover the means whereby the end is to be attained. It is not enough

*To show what everybody might
Become by simply doing right.*

The Marxist believes that within the existing pattern of society this aim cannot be achieved. The question is *what pattern of society makes possible the fulfilment of individual personality*, and how may such a society be brought into existence.

The great fallacy of individualism is that it presupposes that civilization has already established the institutions and relationships within the framework of which man can realize his "nature," that is to say unfold his potentialities and fulfil his needs. Marxism, on the contrary, believes that it is necessary to shatter established institutions so that the real destiny of man may be fulfilled.

Western civilization has indeed assembled all the material

and cultural resources necessary for this. However, the existing social institutions prevent its implementation because they sustain injustice, exploitation, and repression. Consequently they must be changed in order to fulfil the promises of industrial civilization.

It is under socialism, as Marx held, that man is "re-created in the whole richness of his nature and enjoys the unrestricted development and exercise of his physical and spiritual faculties." So far from exalting the state as the supreme reality, Marx himself said: "One must above all avoid setting 'society' up again as an abstraction opposed to the individual. The individual is the social entity. His life is therefore an expression and verification of social life. Man is a distinct individual and his very distinctiveness makes him an individuality."¹¹

THE WITHERING AWAY OF THE STATE

Marxists are well aware of the fact that the social transformation necessary for the fulfilment of individual needs will not come about by persuading *all classes* of its necessity. But if the responsibility thus falls on the working class and its allies, this will involve a heightening of class struggle and ultimately the political defeat of the existing owning class. The state waxes strong and dictatorial during such periods of social crisis, but its aim, in the hands of socialists, is not to preserve by force and legal coercion existing class privileges, but to overthrow and extirpate these. They seek

to use the state *to remove the causes of class conflict*. But when a classless society becomes thoroughly integrated the coercive state recedes, and numerous forms of cooperation take its place. In such a society it is unnecessary to force men into an artificial unanimity.

It is one of the stock objections to Marxism that in fact the state has not withered away. But no Marxist has ever supposed that the state as a ruling authority could disappear so long as the powerful forces of the old order were prepared to stop at nothing to overthrow socialism.

But the state is still a means, not an end, and the more successful it is in safeguarding the development of socialism, maintaining discipline in the turbulent years after the victory of socialism, defending the new order against invasion and counter-revolution, and holding society on its new course through every discouragement and setback, the more quickly and certainly will the time come when tension can be relaxed because the will of the people and of the government are one.

Socialism, then, does not exalt the state, but it uses it so long as is necessary. It does not consider that the state in its authoritarian form is permanent, but as an organizing center it will remain, when the government of men gives place to the administration of things.

In the first stages of socialism the state is necessary "for the purpose of guiding the great mass of the population in the work of economic socialist reconstruction." Subsequently it becomes the administrative and planning organization of

the new society, with immense responsibilities for economic planning, technological advance, education, and the improvement of public health.

The particular forms which the socialist state, and, beyond that, the communist state will take, cannot be anticipated, they must be worked out in practice, as they are now being worked out, in the socialist world of our time.

II. EVERY MAN FOR HIMSELF

INDIVIDUALISM: TRUE AND FALSE

THE PRINCIPLES which are supposed to underlie the Western political tradition are still those of classical individualism; the individual is to be set free from every limitation on his actions which interfere with his pursuit of his own interests—except of course those limitations which preserve the similar rights of others. In a system based on private ownership, the motive of profit and the economy of the market, it is believed that man will contribute, by his own choice and from his own motives, as much as is possible to the needs of others, without men becoming better than they are, or finding good men to run society.

Capitalism, it is claimed, has found a set of institutions by which man can be induced, by his own choice, and from the motive of self-interest, to contribute as much as possible to the needs of others. This is brought about by the operation of economic laws of the market, which has proved the most effective way of making man participate in a process far beyond his comprehension, by which he is made to contribute “to ends which were no part of his purpose.” This, says Professor F. A. Hayek in his defense of individualism, “is a system under which bad men can do least harm,” and in which “though every man’s will shall be as unfettered as possible, the greatest happiness of all is most certainly achieved.”¹

Marxists totally reject this view, not because they do not value the individual, or because they care nothing for freedom, but because they believe that individualism destroys the individual, that it leads to complete loss of freedom and ultimately brings into existence a society which enslaves men to impersonal and destructive economic forces. They do not believe that free enterprise and private property are the necessary prerequisites to the full and free development of human personality.

Marxists believe neither in individualism nor state absolutism. There is a third possibility which seeks the welfare of the individual through common ownership and the conscious pursuit of the common good in planned social production, and that is socialism.

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF INDIVIDUALISM

Both in primitive communities, and in the closed, strongly corporate life of the Middle Ages, the individual tended to be submerged. It was with the Renaissance that men began to break away both from the life-denying discipline of the church and the social pressure of the social order. With this process went an intensification of the senses, a great development of intellectual curiosity, an expansion of every activity that promoted joy and bodily satisfaction, a zest to understand and command all the processes of natural life.

No manifestation of individual freedom and expansion has made a profounder impression than the art and science and

exploration that took place between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. The new spirit left its mark upon the human personality; it created a new self-reliance, a new pride, a new feeling of independence from external authority and the limitations of a narrow religious ethic.

This individualism, with all its achievements and its excesses, was an historical necessity. Spreading from Italy to the other nations of Europe, it has constituted since then the very atmosphere which men breathe. Within it has grown up a modern standard of good and evil—a sense of moral responsibility—which is essentially different from that which obtained in the Middle Ages.

At the Reformation, individualism took a new form. Martin Luther set himself against the combined Papacy and Empire when he vindicated the right of the individual conscience against principalities and powers. Later a new kind of protestantism emerged, transformed by the rationalist movement and influenced by the new secular ideals of intellectual liberty.

We do not wish to go back on this deliverance of mankind from the totalitarian and authoritarian society of the Middle Ages, which held that the church, the organization, was more real than its members, had in fact made them and was the source of their being, a church in which they were saved if they belonged to the Society of the Redeemed, and damned if they were excommunicated. Such an ecclesiastical system naturally accorded with the hierarchical organization of both church and state and its rigid order of pope, bishop,

priest and layman; king, noble, knight, freeman and serf; each performing his special function in his allotted place.

The shattering of the medieval synthesis was a real achievement of individual liberation. In the nineteenth century a succession of thinkers, from Hobbes to Locke and Bentham, sought the basis of social life not in divine revelation or authoritative principles but in human experience. Thus there eventually appeared a new attitude to man and morals which opposed all those schools of thought that found the repository of final values not in individual men and women but in some entity regarded as superior to them, so that they owed service to it, not it to them. In particular, these thinkers were hostile to anyone who treated the state as a mystical being entitled to bind all its citizens to its service, not because of anything the state could do for them, but because of what they could do for the state. They asserted, on the contrary, that states were in fact nothing more, in the last resort, than collections of individuals, and were of value, not in themselves, but only in so far as they contributed to the happiness and well-being of the citizens. The individualist regards Hegel's exaltation of the state, which has had so great an influence on both German and British thought, as mystical nonsense, and certain, if it were accepted, to lead to tyranny that would ride roughshod over human rights and legitimate desires.

One of the most important movements of the nineteenth century was utilitarianism. Its prophets were James Mill, Jeremy Bentham, and John Stuart Mill. The utilitarians were

the intellectual wing of the middle class in the expansion of its political power in England during the early part of the nineteenth century. The theory gave systematic expression to the type of life that the activity of the middle class was fast developing.

It was Bentham who formulated the utilitarian principle in the following manner:

"Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, *pain* and *pleasure*. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do. . . . By the principle of *unity* is meant that principle which approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever, according to the tendency which it appears to have to augment or diminish happiness."²

The utilitarian theory sets the final value on individual human beings with their capacity for experiencing pleasure and pain, happiness and unhappiness, well-being and poverty of life. It makes the test of a civilization's worth the respect paid by society to the individual, not in words, but in actual enhancement of life.

IS THERE A NATURAL HARMONY?

All this is excellent, but there is another side to Bentham. Reasoning, quite illogically, that what would be beneficial to each individual singly must be beneficial to all of them taken together, he proposes to achieve that estimable object, the greatest happiness of the greatest number, by setting everyone

free, economically and as far as legal restraints are concerned, to achieve his own happiness in his own way. Behind this view is the theory of "natural harmony"; the interests of the individual are identical and this would speedily be shown once feudal privileges and irrational governmental restrictions are removed.

*Thus God and Nature link'd the general frame
And bade self-love and social be the same.*

—POPE

Now Bentham's predecessor Helvetius, from whom he learned much, also believed in the supreme importance of individual happiness, the iniquity of existing legal restraints and compulsions, and the *possibility* of harmonizing individual and social interests. But he was wiser than Bentham in believing that *the whole problem was to find a pattern of society in which this would be the case*, and then to *revolutionize* society, which in its present form makes individual interests *antagonistic* to social interests. Bentham believed that *laissez faire* provided just such a society, regarding the structure of British capitalism as the perfectly normal pattern of a human society. The "useful" for the business man must be what is useful and valuable to us all; and by the useful he means the profitable. Whatever seemed useful to that queer kind of "normal" being the British capitalist and to his world, Bentham and his followers regarded as useful and valuable in itself. Thus the acquisition of wealth, the profit motive, was

accepted as the basic motive of the economic man; all aspects of human activity were reduced to money-making. Men, as Ruskin declared, were believed to be driven by purely selfish motives and "as actuated by no other moral influences than those which affect rats or swine."

The socialist movement opposed this degradation of human motive, regarding it as based on a harsh and corrupting system of ethics, which makes a virtue of greed and selfishness. It must, therefore, be replaced by a society in which men regard each other as brothers and prefer cooperation to competition.

Carlyle was one of the first to open fire on what he called the very creed and decalogue of Mammon, affirming that "we have profoundly forgotten everywhere that Cash-payment is not the sole relation of human beings."

THE ANNIHILATION OF MAN

The cheerful optimism of the Benthamites was soon confronted with all the horrors of the industrial revolution and half the principles of laissez faire went overboard in the necessary social measures to cope with the situation. Factory Acts, public health measures, then, later, Social Insurance and all the paraphernalia of the Welfare State, were brought in to mitigate the evils of capitalism. But the basic principles of private ownership, the economic motive and private profit, remained. Long periods of unemployment, overcrowded and

unsanitary slums and very low wages characterized the social scene down to the First World War.

Any qualms as to the increase in the general happiness were allayed by appealing to the biological theories of Charles Darwin. The "struggle for existence" and the "survival of the fittest" guaranteed that competition, ruin, and poverty would weed out inferior types and bring the best to the top. We were advised not to interfere with the beneficent processes of nature.

The assumption was that man is a beast of prey and that the superior type is the most ruthless and destructive. It would follow that the cooperative and unselfish man is inferior and to be eliminated. How does this square with enhancing the value of the individual? It looks, indeed, more like Nietzsche's superman with his master morality riding roughshod over the slaves than a picture of Christian morality.

Yet all this theorizing was really special pleading and was not at all the finding of biological science. The human type has survived not because of its superior predatory powers but chiefly because of the extent of its cooperation. Civilization is the power to advance by other means than biological heredity and extermination. Human morality has evolved not as an ethical ideal which contradicts nature, as T. H. Huxley believed, but as itself having greater survival value than the lust to kill. Engels has aptly characterized the invocation of natural selection to support capitalism:

"Darwin did not know what a bitter satire he wrote on mankind, and especially on his countrymen, when he showed that free competition, the struggle for existence, which the economists celebrate as the highest historical achievement, is the normal state of the animal kingdom."³

In fact these ideas were taken from that part of the animal world which resemble man least and which from a biological point of view is on its way out except in so far as certain species like the cat and the dog have become the servants of man or animals are kept in zoos and nature reserves.

THE EMERGENCE OF COOPERATIVE MAN

The division of labor, the highly developed pattern of mutually advantageous customs, first of all within the clan and then between inter-marrying clans, all point to the emergence of a moral code and of a type of human development adapted for social and not merely personal satisfaction. The social stability upon which survival depends requires the maintenance of relations with one's fellows that are mutually advantageous, on establishing behavior patterns which adjust men to each other harmoniously.

If this is so then we should expect to find a good deal more cooperation and mutual responsibility among men than competitive individualism recognizes; and on the other hand a degenerate trend making not for survival but for extinction where the more animal and less human instincts are fostered

as in the predatory behavior of large sections of capitalist society. This is indeed the case, for though the vigorous enterprise of the earlier capitalists and the pressure to maximize profits and reinvest them in an ever-expanding industry led at first to a great expansion of production, yet a heavy price was paid. The way of life that emerged was unethical and degrading to the individual; finally forces were set in motion that have come to threaten the stability of the whole capitalist structure. Individualism paid for a time, but now the operation of its principles is breaking the very fabric it once built.

Its failure is plainly seen firstly in the failure to so use the unlimited resources of the modern world as to raise the level of two-thirds of the human race now living in the underdeveloped areas of the world. Modern capitalism is responsible not only for the central areas of the capitalist world but those colonial and dependent territories which are an integral part of it, in which its money is invested, from which it draws considerable profits and valuable raw materials and primary products. If conditions have greatly improved in the central areas it is largely because we have profited economically at the expense of the colonies by cheap labor and profitable investment overseas.

AFRICA UNDER CAPITALISM

How profound the poverty of Africa is, few even of those who are deeply sympathetic with African aspirations are

aware. In some of the native reserves 50 percent of the children die before the age of sixteen and infant mortality is 242 per 1,000 (as compared with 25 in Great Britain), the population is infested with parasites and in many areas, nearly all harbor, malaria. In the native reserves 30 percent of families are landless and 20 percent of the land is uncultivable. Here the death-rate is 500 per 100,000 compared with 32 per 100,000 among the white population. Native labor in the Johannesburg gold mines is housed in compounds where food is sufficient and health is looked after; but all here is stagnant, paralytic. And it cannot be otherwise, for a consciously developing labor force would soon break from the narrow frontiers of their scope and begin demanding a larger life. And a larger life would ruin the gold fields, a source of immense profit to British investors. Imagine this great river of African life and vigor flowing and fed from a thousand tributaries in many lands, strong, self-confident, capable of a thousand things, and consider how it drains away, year after year, into this stagnant sea of humanity, this bare and barbarous monotony of the compounds.

But here where racial oppression dominates the whole scene, invades the lives of everyone, tempts and besieges even the most unwilling heart, we are even now seeing the great African awakening. The non-white suffers poverty, disease, contempt; the white man loses all touch with a healthy belief in humanity and the price he pays for his domination is fear, fear for the continuance of his own domination, fear for the

future. A fear that is manifesting itself in desperate endeavors in the Union of South Africa and in Central Africa to hold back the rising tide of nationalism and social aspiration.

INDIA TODAY

The extent to which the individual is really valued in the "Free World" is convincingly demonstrated in India where the average expectation of life is 23 years, the annual income per head \$56. In no major country is there such appalling poverty, such a disease-ridden people, and such abysmal and widespread ignorance.

The mortality rates for different ages give a very accurate picture of social conditions and the standard of living generally. Out of 100,000 persons the number of survivors at the age of 20 is 90,000 in the United States and 50,000 in India; at the age of 40 it is 80,000 in the United States and 35,000 in India; at the age of 60 it is 70,000 in the United States and 15,000 in India.⁴

The population is being forced to lower and lower standards of living, hardly, in many cases, above mere subsistence level. Sir John Boyd Orr has pointed out that in India the whole population loses in peacetime as many years of life as the British soldiers killed in the last war.

The Director of the Indian Medical Service states that "Disease is widely disseminated throughout India and is increasing steadily and rather rapidly." Infant mortality which

is down to 26 per 1,000 in London is 329 per 1,000 in Lucknow and 282 per 1,000 in Calcutta. Even under Indian self-government the improvement has been very slow; in fact instead of an advance, we have had a recession, a gradual impoverishment, only just reversed by the limited successes of the First and Second Five-Year Plans.

This is entirely due to the failure of the government to break with capitalist limitations; its best plans are set in the framework of a capitalist economy, and have accordingly considerably less scope and a smaller degree of governmental control than is required by a really desperate situation, which, according to the experts, points to widespread famine in the next ten years.

The Food Foundation Report on India's famine problem published by the Indian government states that "If India's food production continues to advance only at its present rate the gap between supply of food and subsistence demand by 1965 will be about 25 percent. This would mean starvation on a scale that no conceivable program of imports or rationing would meet."

The Report goes on to state that Indian agriculture can meet the needs of the nation only if the most drastic reforms are undertaken. These would include a gigantic program of land reclamation and public works, the provision of fertilizers and agricultural experts to secure their proper use, and, above all, the replacement of the present credit system, which is in the hands of money-lenders who demand

exorbitant interest and deprive the peasant of all freedom and initiative, by a government system of cooperative banks. But these are reforms that may rather be wished than hoped for in a country still under the control of capitalism.

The *Sunday Express*, July 1958, published a series of articles on "Modern India" by its correspondent Brian Gardner. We can hardly accuse this paper of Communist propaganda but here is the situation as they portray it:

"Old Delhi, a city of narrow bazaars, hovels and tenements, streets filthy with refuse, swarming with flies and fantastically overcrowded. Here and in Calcutta hundreds of thousands of homeless people sleep in the streets. Cholera casts its shadow in Calcutta all the year and every year. It is never stamped out. Squalor, poverty, disease and unemployment are problems hardly touched by the Congress Party after thirteen years of power and in spite of all its schemes of industrialisation.

"In Bombay it is much the same. In the central park men think nothing of sitting on a bench reading a newspaper while starving wretches lie dying beneath. In the mornings the police walk the streets with sticks, prodding the bodies to see if they are still alive."

Nehru's brother-in-law, Raja Hutheesing, who is keenly aware both of the problem and the ineffectiveness of Congress rule, comments: "What happens after Nehru? I don't know. My main fear now is Communism."

"Everywhere," says Gardner, "the word is on the people's lips: We are going Red, nothing can stop it now."

AID FOR UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Nor is it a sufficient answer to point to the Colombo Plan, the International Bank and similar organizations which have made loans and grants reaching many millions to the underdeveloped countries. These countries are losing more in falling prices of what they export (from which the Western powers profit considerably), amounting to an annual loss of \$2,000,000,000, than they are receiving in the way of economic assistance, while during the same period Britain's increased income of 2 percent has been derived from this fall in the world prices of primary commodities.

Dr. Eugene Staley in an inquiry into *The Future of Underdeveloped Countries*,⁵ after giving these figures, goes on to contrast these efforts with the success of Soviet development of its Eastern Territories where production has been enormously increased, the standard of living raised to a level comparable with that of Moscow and vast social and educational reforms established. He further points out that if we are to help at all we must not, as we have done in the past, identify our policies with those of reactionary governments in backward countries, nor can we expect our help to be of any use apart from social, political, and cultural changes taking place similar to those which occurred in Russia in 1917.

An important article entitled "Why We Must Help" in *The Observer*, August 31, 1958, makes clear why our efforts are meeting with so little success.

"There is a fatal flaw in our approach to the underdeveloped countries for it makes it appear that we are giving help for our own cold war purposes, and not because we share their purpose of giving their people a more abundant life" whereas the Russians offer their help "as a fraternal gift from a pioneer and partner in the great struggle of taming nature."

One of the most surprising features of modern Soviet industry is that Russia is now industrializing backward countries, exporting and erecting blast furnaces, steel works, rolling mills, textile factories, machine-tool concerns, and oil refineries, especially in China but also in other countries. Russian technicians are now available for raising the technological level of all those underdeveloped countries which are increasingly suspicious of American and British "aid" which usually has political strings attached. Two-thirds of the capitalist world, says *The Observer*, is ill-clothed and ill-fed. India is facing this problem with state-capitalist schemes. If China's Communist plan succeeds notably better than India's and India is in financial straits, the chances that any other underdeveloped country in Asia or Africa will follow the capitalist rival would be reduced to zero, for that method would have been shown as unsuitable for the developing world in Asia, in Africa and elsewhere.

BEHIND THE FACADE

It is seldom realized in the West that behind the imposing facade of great cities like Buenos Aires and Cairo similar con-

ditions of abject poverty exist, while in the agricultural hinterland an appallingly low standard of village life is to be found.

Complacency with conditions nearer home is seldom seriously disturbed by poverty and backwardness in Spain, Portugal, Greece, Persia, Southern Italy, and Sicily.

A sentimental interest in the slumming activities of Danilo Dolci in Sicily has recently taken the lid off Palermo and its surrounding villages. "Is it possible for anybody to be happy here?" a woman asked in despair, and her husband replied: "Happy! You are not expected to be happy. That is for the next world, as the priest tells you." Behind the million-dollar Palace of Justice, the Cathedral and the Massimo Theatre, lie slums where, if one penetrates the narrow alleys, one comes across a stifling antheap of humanity. Several generations living and sleeping in a single room strewn with rags. Rubbish and junk everywhere," reports Frank Barker of the *News Chronicle*, April 18, 1960, who spent three weeks with Danilo Dolci. Dolci is devoting himself to the impossible task of ridding Western Sicily of its corruption, hunger, and disease.

Not even the United States is the capitalist paradise so often supposed. In President Truman's *Economic Report to Congress*, January 6, 1950, we read:

"The present programs of social security are grossly inadequate. Because of the limited coverage of the present laws, and the exhaustion of benefits by many workers, one-third of the unemployed are now receiving no unemployment in-

surance benefits, and in some areas the proportion approaches two-thirds. Many communities provide no public funds for the relief of jobless workers and their families. There are also several million disabled workers, many with families to support, who are not eligible for public insurance benefit. In some places they do not even receive public relief. Only 30 percent of the aged population are eligible for social insurance benefits, which are so meager that few can retire voluntarily. Needed medical care is denied to millions of our citizens because they have no access to systematic and adequate methods of meeting the cost."

At a stone-laying ceremony in Washington, Truman spoke again of "the evils of the sweatshop and the slum, the evils of needless disease and poverty, the evils of social injustice," still rampant in the United States. The Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States Department of Labor estimated that, at the beginning of 1957, it required \$4,400 to meet a family budget in major cities. In 1960, 23 percent of all American families (households of two or more related persons) had annual incomes less than \$4,000. In 1957, the average annual income of Negro families was \$2,764 and 50 percent of all Negro families earned less than this. Is this the best the Affluent Society can do?

Anyone who has visited New York City can report on the appalling slum areas behind the facade of skyscrapers, and in the Southern states both among poor whites and Negroes there is a subnormal standard of life of which no American can be proud.

THE AFFLUENT SOCIETY

It is usually assumed today that apart from a few black spots in our society we have as a nation done pretty well out of capitalism. But J. K. Galbraith⁶ has already drawn attention to the crazy scale of values which increases private wealth and impoverishes public service. What cannot be provided at a profit will either be supplied in a niggardly way from the public purse or not provided at all. Hence the failure to provide for goods that the national health demands but which the uncriticized economic system does not provide at all, or provides in inadequate quantities and distorted forms.

The unspoken assumption always is that things that are not producible under the motives of business are really not important. Britain has thus arrived at a society capable of luxury and comfort for a considerable proportion of its people, even of waste and extravagance, but incapable of dealing with the major areas of its social life; a rich, even vulgarly rich, society but unable to afford adequate hospitals and old age pensions, with only 6 percent of its schoolchildren going on to a University education, twenty-fifth in the list of countries, just above Turkey in this respect, with 75 percent of the children denied a decent secondary education and leaving school at 15, while it is proposed only to *consider* the question of raising the school-leaving age to 16 in ten years' time. Yet Britain is prepared to spend \$4.2 billion a year on armaments and the United States much more, not

because of any real threat but, as a political commentator observed, because "Armaments are a luxury without which capitalism cannot survive."⁷ The U.S. economy could only survive the shock of a drastic cut in its defense, he goes on to say, if she could find some other totally useless way (economically speaking) of absorbing the surplus which capitalism dare not devote to health, education, housing, feeding the hungry millions of the backward areas or financing their economic reconstruction. He suggests that there is now such a way of wasting money in occupying the moon or the planets!

Perhaps even worse than this neglect of genuine human needs is the deep-seated moral corruption of all classes in our capitalist society. It becomes increasingly apparent that where property is sacred and the pursuit of profit the accepted motive, then all human relations and all moral judgments are vitiated, real values disappear, and the rat-race is on. We are now living in a world of unscrupulous advertising, faked claims and dishonest endorsements, to which public figures are quite willing to lend their names for a cash payment, a world where hardly anything is what it is claimed to be. A world of lies, cheating, and dishonor. One calls in question today the whole moral worth of our business civilization. This is increasingly realized by those who accept its principles but deplore its practice. The reaction to such exposures of American life as Thomas Griffith's *Waist-High Culture*⁸ is that a society that lives by and for endless streams of new gadgets made marketable by gimmicks will have a hard time

competing with the Soviet Union. And it will have a hard time selling itself abroad, for the life it offers does not appeal to the more dedicated, energetic, and brave of the younger generations in Asia and Africa.

THE DECLINE OF CAPITALIST SOCIETY

The effect of the internal cannibalism of business and the preoccupation with luxury and extravagance is a steady decline to a state of spiritual nullity, while minority views and interests, genuine controversy, the expression of salutary but unpopular opinions, all tend to diminish, and genuine individuality with them. A vulgar society of which no decent person could be proud.

Other signs of the same trend are the drift and thrust towards war, the racism of the white supremacists, the hypocrisy of much organized religion, the boredom and the brainwashing that pass as education, the apathy of the public to genuine political issues, towards German rearmament and the dangers of atomic war.

We were told that if everyone pursued his own private interests we should be led, "as if by an invisible hand," to serve the public interest. Nothing could be further from the truth today. When the giant corporation pursues its own private interests—as it must by the very law of its being—it is led by a not-so-invisible hand to degrade and corrupt the moral standards of a public dependent on it not only for jobs and material goods but also for the "food of the

mind" provided by the commercial control of radio, the daily press, and the popular weeklies.

We need not go to socialist sources for a keen realization of the deep corruption of our acquisitive society. George F. Kennan, former U.S. Ambassador to Moscow, a former Reith lecturer, sums up the situation in these words:

"If you ask me whether a country in the state this country is in today, with no highly developed sense of national purpose, with the overwhelming accent of life on personal comfort and amusement, with a dearth of public services and a surfeit of privately sold gadgetry; with a chaotic transportation system, with its great urban areas being gradually disintegrated by the headlong switch to motor transportation, with an educational system where quality has been extensively sacrificed to quantity—if you ask whether such a country has, over the long run, good chances of competing with a purposeful, serious and disciplined society such as that of the Soviet Union, I must say that the answer is, 'No'."⁹

III. MAN UNDER CAPITALISM

ORGANIZATION MAN

IT IS ironical that those who are with so much earnestness defending their own civilization against the socialist menace, which is "to transform man into a component of the great Collective Man" (Aldous Huxley), are seeing around them in the Western culture they so much prize, with the high value which it alone gives to the individual, the typical product of capitalist society—*Organization Man*.¹ This turns out to be almost exactly what the philosophers and publicists of capitalism have always told us man has become under communism!

The impact of the great organizations of American life on the individual, says William H. Whyte, has had the effect of reducing him to a prototype personality, dominated by group thinking, consensus, participation, togetherness, and belonging. Men do not simply work for organizations, they belong to them. They have enslaved themselves. Everyone has to accommodate himself to the needs of this society, and ideological conditioning makes legitimate and justifies the tremendous pressures of society against the individual.

When he is faced with frustration and conflict, he attempts to overcome this by more conformity aided by the "life adjustment" psychology of education and the analyst. Thus he is taught to question his motives when his individual de-

sires are opposed to those of the group. The burden of responsible decision is taken from him and he obtains instead security, material comfort and authoritative guidance.

There is no tolerance in such a society, says this terrifying document. The organization people stop abruptly in the face of any questioning of their central and unifying doctrine. Individuals ought not to find themselves out of step with the group and if they do "the cruelty with which an otherwise decent group can punish the deviate" soon brings them into line.

ALIENATION

Marx condemned capitalist society because it was one in which man considers his fellow man as a means, degrades himself to a means, and so becomes a plaything of alien forces. This, argued Marx, is a caricature of a true human community, for man has become isolated from other men, the human bond is broken and only the cash nexus of an economic relationship remains.

This arises not from some moral fault of the capitalist but from the very nature of the economic system in which everything is bought and sold as a commodity. The worker produces commodities for the market. The result is that everything man in a capitalist society produces confronts him as something alien, as a power independent of the producer. He actually brings into existence economic forces

which thrust him hither and thither, which are completely beyond human control, which are destructive of human life and happiness. The economic laws, the forces of the market, which give rise to crises of over-production or inflation, to trade wars and international competition, seem utterly impersonal and irresistible, and hostile to human personality.

Yet these very forces arise only from the commodity form which human labor takes under capitalism. How has this come about? Hegel was getting at it when he described the new industrial system as he saw it: It was bourgeois property which had distorted the relations between men, and had brought into existence a strange world governed by inexorable laws, a "dead" world in which human life was frustrated. Hence the loss of freedom and unity and the numerous conflicts that abound in human living. This, says Hegel, is particularly seen in the modern factory where the consciousness of the worker is mechanized and his labor changes from the self-realization which it ought to be into self-negation in a "vast system, *a moving life of the dead*. This system moves hither and yon in a blind way and calls for control and curbing."²

Marx took up this idea and, stripping it of certain metaphysical elements, made it the keystone of his thought. It is when man's labor is bought and sold as a commodity, when the mechanics of capitalist economics get moving, that man becomes a mere cog in the machine and is stripped of his humanity. For Marx, progress towards the social ownership

of capital and its operation for social need is the path towards the emancipation of man, his achievement of real manhood, real personality. Meanwhile man is sundered from man, man himself is a divided personality, man and society cannot reconcile their interests.

This is our modern world and this the alienation, the estrangement, the sickness of the individual. Mental health, individual normality and fulfilment can only be achieved under socialism, in which man's exploitation of man, and man's consequent inhumanity to man, have been ended. The frustrations and conflicts of the mind today are a reflection of a pervasively contradictory and threatening society, which can only be resolved by social ownership. In a competitive world it is difficult, except in the family and in certain co-operative groups, for men to relate themselves harmoniously to other people—and the man who is estranged from others is estranged from himself.

If Marx had stopped here, his major contribution to social theory would have been missing. *How* is this transition to socialism to be brought about? In his article "Frederick Engels" (1893), Lenin reminds us that while the utopian socialists and humanitarian reformers "looked upon the proletariat as a sore and nothing else and watched with horror the spread of this sore with the growth of industry, Marx and Engels based all their hopes upon the continuous growth of the proletariat. The more proletarians, the greater their strength as a revolutionary class, the nearer and more possible

would be socialism. The service rendered by Marx and Engels to the working class can be expressed as follows: they taught the working class to know itself, to be conscious of itself and to put science in the place of dreams.

"What is important in the doctrine of Marx is his explanation of the universal historical role of the proletariat as the creator of socialist society."

In other words the very conditions that create alienation, exploitation and the destruction of human personality, create also the reaction, the opposite tendency, the working-class movement which is the only force capable of ending capitalism and building a classless society. It is when the workers become conscious of the situation and *their part in it* that the moment of change arrives. Society itself in them discovers the law of its own development and of its transformation. Marxism finds in the proletariat which capitalism created the force destined to change it, to break and dissolve the present form of society and to create the new form. That is why Marx describes the working class as "the class that holds the future in its hands."

The importance of the human person is seen here not only in the repudiation of "the economic man," not only in the rescue of man from what degrades him, but in the need for personal consciousness of responsibility and opportunity, for the awakening of individual hearts and minds to the class need that is also a total human need. Communism is not anything so impersonal as the automatic transformation of so-

ciety, an irresistible change in which the human will plays no part. It is the consciousness of revolution; and without that consciousness it will not happen.

THE ROAD TO SERFDOM

How this has come about we may learn if we will from Marx, and, if we will not, from the chief theorist of capitalist individualism himself, Professor Hayek. Warning us against *The Road to Serfdom*, i.e., socialism, and fervently advocating the "open society" of individualism rather than the "closed society" of social ownership and control, he proceeds to explain that the operation of the economic laws of a free economy (which will, he says, automatically achieve the maximum social good) must on no account be interfered with when they take irrational and unethical forms and appear to be destructive of personality, in other words when his "open society" inevitably turns into a "closed society"—which is exactly what he wished to avoid!

The consequences are illuminating. Hayek finds himself trying to explain why it is that the naked market proves to be a far greater threat to freedom than the planning and controls he abominates, and why men must at all costs resist the temptation arising from their craving to understand and control forces to which they should submit without question.

"The individual in participating in the social processes must be ready and willing to adjust himself to changes and

to submit to conventions which are not the result of intelligent design, *whose justification in the particular instance may not be recognized, and which to him will often appear unintelligible and irrational* [our italics].”³

The economic system will not work out according to our individual standards of justice and morality, but we must learn to “submit to the anonymous and seemingly irrational forces of society and to moral rules whose utility cannot be rationally demonstrated.”

The trouble is, he complains, that people are too individualistic to submit to the rule of iron economic law. It is most inconvenient that men have so strong a sense of justice that there comes a point at which they refuse to tolerate its violation by market forces. But if they assert the right of the individual to this degree they will wreck the whole automatic mechanism of the capitalist economic system!

THE FEAR OF FREEDOM

As the psychologist Erich Fromm points out,⁴ this leads to a great fear and anxiety. Finding his life determined by forces outside his own self, his interests and his wishes, religion comes to man's aid to persuade him that happiness is to be found only in *submission*, in getting rid of the individual self, of the burden of freedom, in the acceptance of one's insignificance. This religion of self-denial and sacrifice is meant for those whose economic situation does not allow

them any happiness, where there is no possibility of bringing about a social order which would make personal happiness possible for every individual.

Fromm advances the theory that this submission is balanced, as it were, by the desire to find and accept a magic helper, a Führer, and to become part of a bigger whole, the state, the nation. This he believes is one of the psychological or ideological forces behind fascism, which wants to exploit the very poverty of the masses in order to make them believe in the Führer's evangel of self-annihilation. The masses have to resign themselves and submit if the desire for power of the leader and the ruling plutocracy are to be realized.

Religion, in most of its forms, strongly reinforces this feeling of worthlessness and insignificance, of being a powerless tool, and deprives man of the self-confidence and of the feeling of human dignity which is necessary for any stand against the ruling class. This is, indeed, the main theme of contemporary Protestant theology, which constantly affirms the sinfulness and powerlessness of man, and bitterly reproaches him for his vain attempts to better the world and control his own destiny.*

* Lenin pointed out, in a letter to Gorky, that "There was a time in history when, in spite of this origin, and this the real meaning of the idea of God, the democratic and proletarian struggle took the form of a struggle of *one religious* idea against another." No one could accuse Cromwell's Ironsides of being deprived of the self-confidence and of the feeling of human dignity which is necessary for a stand against the ruling class. Religion has also given powerful support to the privileges and pretensions of rulers. But official religion as preached to the exploited has always inculcated humility and docility.

The philosophers of reaction who accept these doctrines, and very powerfully propagate them, have no hope in man's future; they believe rather in catastrophe, in man's helplessness before it, in its necessity, and in the terrible disappointments of the seduced optimist.

But Fromm points out that since this is a neurotic solution it leaves unchanged the condition which gave rise to it and the result is the opposite of what was desired. Loneliness is *not* assuaged, confidence is *not* restored. The real emancipation of the people is still to come. The real solution to the paradox of freedom has yet to be discovered.

THE AGE OF ANXIETY

Other forms of psychoanalytical theory recognize the prevalence of neurosis directly attributable to the stresses of a competitive society.⁵ Their way of dealing with this situation, however, is not to reconstruct society to eliminate the strains, but to work on the individual until he is brought into a state of acquiescence to the requirements of capitalist society.

Their analysis of the causes of neurosis is instructive and throws a flood of light on the real nature of individualism. Give free rein to individual ambition, remove all restraint except those securing a free field for all, let everyone pursue his own interests and what do you get? Not the maximizing of individual goods, the greater happiness of the greater

number, as Bentham thought and as Hayek and Popper think today, but a "menace to the entire development of the individual."⁶

The effects on personality are fears, the impoverishment of individuality, ineffectualness, inertia, indecisiveness, pretence and hopelessness.⁷ Into the various neurotic trends which result we need not go—a heightened aggressiveness on the one hand, with suppression of the instinct for friendship and cooperation, but also with a hidden component of fear; or extreme timidity and withdrawal on the other hand. The important question is what is to be done about it.

Horney, Fromm, Thompson, and other analytical psychologists treat this as a problem of reconciling the individual to conditions which are accepted as unalterable, taking society at the level on which it confronts him without questioning its origin, its legitimacy, or its possibilities of transformation into a more cooperative social structure. It is the personality that has to be adjusted to an unnatural war of all against all, not society that has to be brought into line with the higher possibilities of human nature.

The strained individual has to be "cured" so that he can continue to function as part of a sick civilization without surrendering to it altogether. Therapy is a course in resignation. The question is only how much resignation the individual can stand without breaking up. So the method is to *balance* aggression against submission, good against bad, acceptance of loss against moderate gains—the everyday wisdom of the man who has learnt not to ask too much of life.

"Blessed is he who expects little, for he shall never be disappointed."

The individual who does not accept the necessity for accommodation is of course regarded as an incurable neurotic, especially if he espouses the cause of socialism.

THE END OF FREEDOM ROAD

Thus do things turn into opposites. Here, as we have so often been told, "bourgeois social relations reveal that even their freedom is not real freedom, generating as they do a mass of unfreedom as the opposite pole to a little freedom,"⁸ and leading to "viler and viler cash relations, filling men with hate, which will some day become hate for the system."⁹

It is the open society of competing individuals that in fact deprives us of our freedom, and turns into its opposite—the closed society.

"So far from making us free, it has bound us over to chance. Blind fate in the shapes of war, unemployment, slumps, despair and neurosis, attacks the 'free' bourgeois and his 'free' followers. His struggles put him into the power of finance capital, trustify him, or, if he is a 'free' laborer, he is herded into the mass production factory. So far from being free he is whirled like a leaf on the gales of social change."¹⁰

We are now on the way to a complete understanding of the real meaning of individualism. Professing a unique concern for the sacredness and freedom of the individual, and denouncing socialism for reducing the individual to a "mere

cog in a vast impersonal machine," insisting that communism "writes down the value of human life and of the individual person until it is only a unit in a mathematical equation,"¹¹ nevertheless it is individualism itself, as it embodies its principles in modern capitalism, that has reduced the individual to precisely this dehumanized condition.

NEW BEGINNINGS

It would be a mistake to regard the area of capitalist civilization as so hopelessly corrupted and damned that there is nothing for it but to look eastward to the new socialist countries. The division between the two worlds is not simply a vertical one. It is horizontal too. Just as there are remnants of a pre-socialist mentality and anti-socialist habits from China to Czechoslovakia, so there are tendencies making for socialism and struggling against the infection and stranglehold of capitalism everywhere in the West.

Capitalism not only dehumanizes, it awakens a spirit of resistance and fierce antagonism. This has been seen in the trade union and labor movements, in the revolt of the intellectuals and men of moral sensitivity, from Blake and Shelley to Ruskin and Morris. It is seen in the literature and drama of social protest; and even in films and radio.

Not only do we see signs of hope in the growing spirit of revolt among the worst sufferers of capitalism—the colonial peoples, or in the opposition to nuclear warfare—but in the deeper analysis of the economic situation. As Lenin once said:

"Socialism looks out at us through all the windows of capitalism." Economic development, so far from consolidating capitalism, points increasingly towards development in the direction of an economy planned to utilize the combined resources of the world for the advantage of all mankind. Socialism is today on the agenda of history.

As Stalin said: "Something is always arising and developing, and something always disintegrating and dying away"¹²—the negative and positive sides of any social situation, the struggle between the past and the future.

True, the forces making for life may seem puny and those standing for the present immensely strong, at any rate in England and the United States, but in the new life, weak though it may appear, is the promise and potency of coming triumph. Here is the real strength, whereas in the apparently unshakable strength of the old world are seeds of decay and inner weakness.

Both the social scientist and the poet understand these opposite tendencies and are aware of the rising power which will eventually destroy the old order. Their vision is not something counterposed to reality, it is the recognition of what is part of reality. The essence of the real situation is that it contains this powerful thing which is the promise of future victory.

*Sing on: somewhere, at some new moon
We'll learn that sleeping is not death,
Hearing the whole earth change its tune.*

—YEATS

IV. MAN UNDER SOCIALISM

ANTHEAPS AND BEEHIVES

ACCORDING TO Dr. Arnold Toynbee, the great dilemma of our times is the clash between the individual and society. "The underlying issue is the tug-of-war between individual souls and a collective humanity—the human equivalent of antheaps and beehives."

Toynbee has fallen into the common error of posing individualism and statism as the antithesis which confronts us. This is to create a hopeless and utterly unnecessary dilemma and to obscure the whole issue. We want neither an individualism that rejects social obligation and the opportunity to find oneself in fellowship, nor the worship of the state that loses the individual in the community. In fact both these are equally destructive of the personality.

There is a third alternative, which is in fact nothing strange and paradoxical or even new, but the plain lesson of all human experience. Man's nature is essentially social and he finds himself and develops his personality only in society.

But what is often overlooked by those who recognize this is the fact that, while it remains essentially true, there is much in our society which is frustrating and against which one should rebel; often indeed it is the basic structure of society which is hostile to the welfare of the individual. This is the case with regard to contemporary society, and it is

the reason why many people, often men of some sensitivity, are in rebellion against society and believe that they can only save their souls by flight.

In any society whose demands unfairly limit the freedom of certain individuals, or are directly hostile to their interests, individuals will defy that society and become rebels or even criminals. Natives who break the pass laws, slaves who run away, nineteenth-century workers defying the law by forming trade unions, people refusing to pay taxes, all these are law-breakers. They are, however, law-breakers because the law, and the society it supports, is hostile to their legitimate interests. The way to eliminate "crime" of this kind is to change the law, and that may well mean to change the structure of society.

SOCIETY VERSUS THE INDIVIDUAL

It would be a mistake therefore to assume that any and every society takes care of the interests of its individual members in pursuing its own ends. In society as we know it in the capitalist West, while individual interests and social demands are to some extent in harmony (more at some times than at others), occasions frequently arise where the welfare of the individual can only be secured at the expense of the community, as when the starving man can only live and feed his family by theft, or the business man only avoid failure by sharp practice. It is in these circumstances that duties are imposed on its members which in no way further

their welfare or self-fulfilment. In such cases the pressure of society upon the individual affected, whether through custom or the law, is resented as negating essential human needs.

It may then be discovered that the "interests of society" as expressed in the law are simply the interests of a privileged class. Where this is the case, obedience, docility, and self-sacrifice are not virtues at all, but a slave morality. A capitalist society will frequently demand sacrifices which it claims are in the interests of all but which are really only necessary in the interests of a small section of the community. The functioning of the whole economic system, on which we all depend, is geared to the profitability of production to the investor. If profitability requires higher prices to the consumer and lower wages to the worker, then we are enjoined to accept these sacrifices for the good of society.

MAN AS A SOCIAL BEING

But while some societies, including our own, may oppress and may even destroy the individual, not every society is bound to have this effect, and even a bad society does much for the individual.

Indeed, the simple truth is that we owe our very selves, our personality, our possibilities of self-fulfilment, to society. We do not need therefore to escape from it, but to make it better, to bring it into harmony with the interests of the great majority who make it up; even though this requires a radical reconstruction of the whole social pattern.

No one can develop as an individual except in so far as he becomes a social being, enters into social contacts, participates with others in common projects. This is how the child develops a normal personality. The very idea of the self involves the idea of relations to other selves—of sympathy, of help and cooperation, of recognition of their rights. If the child begins as an egoist he either grows into sociality or else becomes abnormal and ends up as a neurotic or in a mental home or in jail. The normal person learns not only to respect others but to satisfy his needs in, through, and with the satisfaction of others.

But in some societies, while in certain relationships co-operation is achieved, in others the class nature of society denies its possibility. In a classless society human beings co-operate readily because they have common tasks which achieve the general good, and in which they can believe.

Here the developing personality is not one that retreats more and more into the self, but one that continually widens the circle of others, from the family to the locality, and from thence to ever-widening circles within the community, and eventually by extending still further to members of the human race outside one's own community so that the whole of mankind is eventually included.

Most people would agree with this. Where difference of opinion arises is on the question of how such a society is to be brought about. This will not be done by proclaiming the abstract possibility of the harmonization of individual and social interests, but by achieving *the conditions of social*

organization which are indispensable to this. A classless society can only be achieved when a privileged class—which will never abdicate—has been deprived of its power. It is the fruit of inescapable class struggle, on behalf, however, not merely of one class but of all men.

This struggle has been proceeding for centuries, from one stage to another. The defeat of feudalism achieved something important in the way of more just relationships between men and a wider freedom; bourgeois constitutionalism was another step forward. These advances did not overcome the class nature of society, but they did hasten the day of its passing. Thus the individual peasant did achieve a fuller personality with the end of feudalism, and the worker became more of an individual when he became a trade unionist and a voter. As Lenin said: "A wider, more free and open form of the class struggle enormously assists the proletariat in its struggle for the annihilation of all classes";¹ and this freer form has been achieved in capitalist society.

SELF-REALIZATION

Where does the individual come from whose self is to be realized? He is permeated by the world, by heredity, by the tradition of his country, by his education. He is not an isolated subject: over against him there is his object, what he is related to, the world of other people. The child has been born at a certain time of parents of a certain race and at a certain level of culture. He is born not into a desert

but into a living organism. Nor is he for one moment left alone, habits are inculcated and instincts slowly mature and are moulded by habituation.

"He grows with his world, his mind fills and orders itself, and when he can separate himself from that world, and know himself apart from it, then by that time his self, the object of his self-consciousness, is penetrated, infected, characterized by the existence of others. Its content implies in every fibre relations of community. He learns to speak and here he appropriates the common heritage of his race. He grows up in an atmosphere of example and general custom.

"Is he now to try and develop his individuality, his self which is not to be the same as other selves? Where is it? What is it? Where can he find it? The soul within him is saturated, is filled, is qualified by, it has assimilated, has got its substance, has built itself up from, it is one and the same life with the universal life."²

The individual apart from community is an abstraction. It is not anything real, and hence not anything that we can "realize" however much we may wish to do so. To know what a man is you must not take him in isolation. In short man is a social being; he is real only because he is social, and can realize himself only because it is as a social being that he realizes himself. The attempt to realize himself alone is the starvation and mutilation of human nature, with total sterility or the production of monstrosities.

As Maritain says:

"Man is very far from being a pure person; the human

person is a poor, material individual, an animal born more poverty-stricken than all other animals. . . . The human person is at the lowest level of personality, stripped and succourless; a person destitute and full of needs. Because of these deep lacks and in accordance with all the complements of being which spring from society and without which the person would remain, as it were, in a state of latent life, it happens that when a person enters into the society of his fellows, he becomes a part of a whole larger and better than its parts—and the entire person is engaged in and exists with a view to the common good of society.”³

THE JUST SOCIETY

We see then what the real problem of the individual and society is. It is to so reconstruct society that individual and social interests are not fundamentally incompatible. This, of course, seems utopian. It is not so. There are many such associations where in principle a radical antagonism of interests does not exist—a well-run school, the tennis club, the orchestra and so on. This does not mean that there is no conflict of interests, but that they are not incapable of being adjusted, provided that there is a certain amount of give and take.

It is here indeed that the psychologist has a useful function to fulfil in reducing the egoism of some and increasing the halting sociality of the timid, and it is here that the

educator and the sociologist are confronted with the task of organizing human institutions in such a way as to foster the social spirit and at the same time to get the best type of individual. But it has clearly to be understood that there are types of family, school, and industry, and there are social orders like slavery, which in their very nature contradict the requirements of such a community of interests, either by giving the individual, or the society, absolute rights. In such cases no adjustments are possible and no reform of the institution will do, but only radical reconstruction. The inadequate pattern must be scrapped.

As far as society today is concerned, the problem is not one of outlining a utopia and then getting everyone to agree to its construction; if that were so the whole approach would indeed be deserving of derision. On the contrary the problem is an historical one and an economic one. It is on the agenda of history *now*, as a challenge which cannot be avoided. It is economic because society has reached a dilemma—how can modern capitalism develop the backward areas of the world, advance its own educational and social services and avoid devastating economic conflict between group and group, nation and nation? How can capitalism survive without war, either to smash its rivals or absorb its unconsumable surplus?

There is no ultimate escape from these problems short of socialism. The capitalist thinks otherwise. The socialist points also to the internal disintegration, moral and ideological, of capitalist society, in such a situation.

*Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold.
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned.
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.
We are closed in; and the key is turned
On our uncertainty.*

—YEATS

FREEDOM THROUGH SOCIAL OBLIGATION

The steady decline of contemporary society is destructive both of civilization and of the individual. Its reconstruction is urgent.

This is not the place to outline either the concrete shape of a socialist society or the sequence of steps towards it. Our task is to clarify the underlying principles of socialism and to show how the individual is to be saved *through* a just and cooperative form of society, not through escape from social bonds. With Rousseau we desire to find "a form of association which will defend and protect us with the whole common force of the person and good of each associate, and in which each, while uniting himself with all, may still obey himself alone, and remain as free as before."⁴

This is the crux of the matter. If the constraints of society are really hostile to the individual, then he cannot both obey and be free. He must either be a slave or a rebel. In a just society, however, what he is required to do is in

his own interests, or secures interests he wholeheartedly approves and in which every individual shares. This may well involve discipline and sacrifice, but he freely accepts this. Such social obligation is fully compatible with freedom. It must be sharply distinguished both from the imposition of state requirements which are not in the individual interests, and the pseudo freedom which is contrary to the interests of society, including the individuals who make it up.

THE COMMON GOOD

We must therefore draw a clear distinction between three social aims: (a) the good of the state, (b) the good of a multitude of individuals all pursuing their own interests and (c) the common good. The latter is quite distinct from the good of the state and equally distinct from the individualist aim, the old disguised anarchic conception of bourgeois industrialism.

The *common good*, which is neither of these, is the good human life of us all. It is common to the whole and to the parts, to which it flows back so that all shall benefit. Such a good is indeed the good of the whole—of one's family, one's club, one's trade union, or any association to which one belongs. Therefore it is not a mere aggregate good—the welfare of the community must be in our mind. It is a good for which we must unselfishly work, as when parents sacrifice themselves for the family. But its essential characteristic is that the good must be redistributed among the persons, since

there is no ultimate good but the good enjoyed by persons. In such a society man finds himself by serving the group, and the group attains its goal only by serving its members. In such an association the wholeness of the person is increased and preserved because it is a functioning part of society, consciousness of self is indeed actually intensified, the sense of personal identity becomes more vivid and one's loyalty to one's society becomes more firmly established than ever.

Once more it must be emphasized that merely to establish the possibility of such a "common good" and then to *preach* it as a gospel, as though "just the act of being kind is all this sad world needs," is, to use Marx's trenchant phrase, "so much worthless earnestness." Even if all men were successfully re-educated from competitiveness to cooperativeness (an impossibility, of course), they would be unable to give social reality to their new standards of conduct without first completely revolutionizing the economic base of society, for competition is the very essence of that economy.

That is why an ethical program by itself is without positive, progressive effect. Its effect is indeed negative, and to that extent reactionary, diverting human energies from constructive action, or misleading masses of people by arousing unrealizable hopes. For this reason the mere preaching of the ideal of the common good, or any other social ideal, is unethical, however much humanistic fervor motivates the preacher.

Marxists deny any real efficacy to programs of moral uplift, to calls upon the conscience, to appeals to brotherly love. This is not because they deny the moral consciousness, but because they take it too seriously to tolerate the hypocrisy or stupidity of mere lip-service. It is this that Marxists attack, not ethics, moral responsibility, genuinely humanist equalitarianism or real justice.

By their analysis of the increasing difficulties of capitalist society, and by their perception of the growth of a popular movement whose demands will not be denied, they are envisioning not merely the *possibility* of a classless society, but its *necessity*; and what *must* be done those most vitally interested will in due course *perceive* and, under the stress of circumstances, *will*. This requires not mere acceptance of change, as if it would come by itself, but struggle. Man must fight for that society in which the common good can at last be realized. There is no hope of human liberation without fight. The ethic of the common good is thus ineffectual and meaningless without the ethic of action, pug-nacity, and partisanship. The Marxist is aware of the truth to which so many well-intentioned reformers are blind, that today's ethical problem is not one of interpreting the good abstractly but of creating it concretely in society by struggle and sacrifice.

V. TOWARDS A NEW SOCIETY

SOCIAL MAN

BY OUR very nature we are social as well as individual beings, and it is only by opening ourselves to other persons, by allowing the walls of the self to be breached, that we realize ourselves. This is both a personal and a social matter; not only is it the only way to personal fulfilment, but the fate of mankind hinges on the extent to which we can replace the isolation and self-centeredness of the individual by social feeling.

The individualist illusion, powerfully fostered by the corrupting effects of *capitalist* society in the individual, is that man is free only in so far as he escapes the constraints of society. But society is a creation by which man attains a fuller measure of freedom than by the rejection of social discipline. The great error of individualism is that it believes man to be free not through but *in spite of* social relations, so that Isaiah Berlin can plead for "the existence of a limited but nevertheless real area of human freedom," i.e., an area free from natural law, from historical necessity, from social obligation. Freedom, for him, "is simply the area within which a man can do what he wants. . . . There ought to exist a certain minimum area of personal freedom which must on no account be violated."¹ This is to forget that we are free to achieve nothing worthwhile except in dependence

on natural law and by uniting with our fellows in co-operative effort that needs constraint in order to get things done. Freedom is the practicability of purpose, and purpose only becomes practicable when it realizes its aims through scientific understanding and social effort. We must learn that *bonds may be wings*. Man is unfree alone. He attains his freedom by accepting all the necessities of scientific law and all the constraints, obligations, inhibitions, and duties of society—not any society, not a class society, but a society organized to achieve the common good and therefore free from division into owners and workers.

BUT NOT FREEDOM FOR ALL

When man, realizing this, puts an end to the “freedom” which Marxists call the anarchy of capitalist production, and creates a cooperative organization of society, the millions achieve freedom for the first time, but to the few it seems the loss of all the freedoms they most prize. Hence, as Lincoln said: “We behold the process by which thousands are daily passing from under the yoke of bondage, hailed by some as the advance of liberty, and bewailed by others as the destruction of all liberty.”

The endless complaints about the interference with our liberty by the Welfare State always ignore in whose interests the objections are raised. If the constraints imposed have the total effect of increasing the scope and opportunity of millions, freedom is enlarged not limited—though the

privileged may lose out. And when we are told that we have only gained our security at the price of liberty, it is not the liberty of the millions who get the security which is meant but that of the few whose interests have to give way to the needs of the majority. Arguments of this kind make the rights of the individual the principal moral and theoretical justification of class privilege and the deprivation of millions of *individuals* of the opportunities for a fuller life. It is true that socialism is incompatible with the kind of freedom to which we are accustomed. It abolishes many of the freedoms of an acquisitive society, especially the freedom to put the welfare of those who live by profits and dividends above the general welfare; it abolishes their freedom to exploit others; it abolishes their freedom to live without working.

We have to realize that it is class blindness that remains, when all is said and done, the last and sometimes insuperable obstacle to the realization that socialism really does seek the welfare of individuals. Members of an owning class will always be impervious to moral persuasion where their class interests are concerned. They will hold on to power by any means and justify them by the most plausible arguments they can devise. Reason invents specious proofs that privilege serves universal ends. Such ideas are but the outgrowth of the conditions of bourgeois property, the transformation, as Marx said, "into eternal laws of nature and of reason of the social forms springing from the present forms of production. Law, morality, religion, are (to the class-conscious worker)

so many bourgeois prejudices behind which lurk in ambush just as many bourgeois interests."²

Hypocrisy, whether conscious or unconscious, is forced upon us by any system of society from which we derive benefits if it makes our brotherly duty difficult or impossible. This is why there are so many Christian virtues which are professed but not practiced.

In the business world one does not love one's neighbor as oneself, nor is it easy to be just to workers on whose underpaid labor one's dividends and privileges depend. Under these circumstances we discover the difficulty of being as moral as we should like to be in an immoral society.

MORAL MAN AND IMMORAL SOCIETY

This spiritual conflict creates a divided personality. We may insulate ourselves with hypocrisy and pretend that there is no dilemma, making out either that we are better than we are or that the evils are not so bad as can be made out. Or we may accept poverty as inevitable, economic laws as irresistible, and human nature as incurably selfish. But this suppression of the real conflict can only issue in neurosis. To avoid that we must have the courage to recognize that riches and poverty are twin halves of one immoral whole and that only a new economic order will make a really moral attitude to man possible. That realization itself brings into existence a new ethical duty, the duty of social action; fail-

ing that, ethics remains paralyzed, divorced from economics, from politics, and hypocritical in its ineffectuality.

The unification of men on the basis of a common task, of economic activity in the interests of all, makes possible for the first time a truly human morality, a complete morality, and therefore a *complete individual* instead of an individual who is kind to his family, pays his debts, but faced with three million unemployed can do no more than send a bundle of old clothes for the vicar to distribute among the poor.

It is out of a situation torn by contradictions that quite false ethical ideas appear, which are destructive or crippling of the individual, though they are often supposed to qualify for sainthood. We may preach contentment with poverty and the endurance of suffering as Christian virtues, or we may command men to suppress their desire for a fuller life and set their minds on more spiritual things. Thus arises the system of self-denial of the most important and most natural demands of a human being which is preached by many religions. This is not accidental, or a mere mistake in ethical theory. It supports the social order of the ruling classes. It is one of the means of creating the kind of obedient, timid, and passive people that the privileged of all times and periods desire to see. But it does not create the full-orbed individual that in theory individualism wishes everyone to be.

On the other hand we may become acutely aware of our insecurity, filled with disgust at the aims and standards of a commercial age, and thoroughly discontented with ourselves. Thus it will be seen that so far from capitalist institutions

and relationships making for self-realization, they obstruct it and make the realization of our own best ethical ideals impossible.

THE ETHICS OF SOCIALISM

Socialist ethics has two aspects: In the first place it challenges accepted ethical standards of money-making, competition, and property rights, or it challenges the class content of ethical principles, which interprets for instance the equality of all men (before God!) as not incompatible with slavery, or the ethics of employing a man at a subsistence wage and taking from him far more than is given to him in wages as compatible with brotherly love. In the second place it claims to be the heir of the Western tradition; the attainment of freedom, the realization of man, the all-round development of the individual—condensed in the Marxist formula: "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs." The prospective end result of socialist morality thus bestows upon it the dignity of universally valid and objective standards, culminating in the principle of solidarity and cooperation. But it is able to do so because in the socialist pattern of society it has established the preconditions for the free development and fulfilment of all the human faculties of all its members. Let us put down in plain terms those ethical principles which underlie such a socialist society.

1. Positively they declare *life* to be the ultimate value and

of the same importance for each. They demand therefore an equal chance of living and whatever obstructs this must go.

2. Negatively they condemn the enjoyment of the fruits of another's toil. No sin a man may commit, no disgrace he may bring upon himself, is as sinister as economic exploitation.

3. They condemn acquisitiveness, regarding it not as a fundamental instinct, but the result of the conditioning of generations by a capitalist society.

4. They substitute for this the ideal of doing one's share in cooperative work for a collective end from which all benefit. This involves the obligation to work, which entirely replaces the ideal of getting others to work for you.

5. They proclaim that collective labor driven by this motive can accomplish far greater results than the most powerful incentives operative in an individualistic, profit-making society.

These principles, put into effect not in any utopian spirit but because they are rendered necessary by the development of society and the growing frustrations and contradictions of capitalism, require of course an enormous reconstruction of society, involving nothing less than the organization of planned production for consumption; and a prolonged educational program to make the population understand the advantage of everyone participating in cooperation.

The transition from an individualist to a socialist economy is not likely to take place overnight, fifty or a hundred years may well be necessary for a change-over more far-reaching than any yet experienced by the human race. But this transi-

tion has been in progress in the Soviet Union for some forty years now. A critical American journalist, Walter Duranty, long resident in Moscow, sums up the resultant effect on the Russians in the following terms: "It has made a nation of eager, conscious workers out of a nation that was a lump of sodden, driven slaves."

MAKING NEW MEN

Socialism is not a gift from above which automatically renews human nature and transforms the competitive into a cooperative man. It demands re-education. It must cleanse its people from the filth of the old society. It must awaken a new sense of personal responsibility in the worker. In the building of socialism a new man is born, a new socialist individual, possessed of an entirely new world outlook, of a new moral and political type. This is not a transformation of the individual in isolation from society, but the introduction of the individual into a new system of human relations, which are as personal and humane as capitalist relations are mechanical and inhumane.

Of course for a long time difficulties will remain, survivals of old habits and values will persist, contradictions will emerge. The question is not whether a miraculous and complete transformation can be effected in a single moment, but whether a form of association has been achieved in which moral behavior in the economic plane is possible, is feasible, is required by the working of the new system—a

system which secures the welfare of all who serve it. (The more moral you are in modern business the less likely are you to make the system work.) It is a long and uphill task to restrain moral habits, and it cannot be done without setting up ethical codes and teaching them. Literature, drama, and the other arts will have to play their part in creating ideal types and appealing to the imagination.

This transformation of society requires more than good will; it needs a basic theory of social development the aim of which is to replace the anarchic individualism which destroys the individual by that new form of society which Marx envisaged as the end of alienation and the achievement by man of his essential humanity. Marx had a profound intuition, the great lightning flash of truth which traverses all his work, of the condition of heteronomy and loss of freedom produced in the capitalist world by wage slavery, and of the dehumanization with which the possessing classes and the proletariat alike are thereby, simultaneously, stricken. This fact should give those who attribute to Marxism the conception of the superiority of the state to the individual pause to think, and to reflect that the whole philosophy of Marxism is passionate opposition to all relations, all conditions in which man is a humiliated, enslaved, despised creature.

VI. ON LIVING IN A REVOLUTION

THE COMING OF SOCIALISM

FOR A CENTURY men have argued about socialism, preached it, and worked for it; now, in one-fifth of the world, it is here. What is it like?

"I have seen the future, and it works," said Lincoln Steffens, the American journalist. How does it work?

We should expect to find an end to the private ownership of factories, mines, and land, and end to the investment of capital only where it will bring the highest dividends, an end to the employment of men only at those jobs and for that wage which will pay the capitalist. Instead we should expect the nation's material resources and manpower to be organized in a planned fashion to produce, firstly, enough food and clothing and other consumption goods to keep everybody going; secondly, particularly in poorly developed countries, the devotion of the maximum proportion of effort to new factories, mines, power stations, and transport; thirdly, the assignment of a considerable proportion of the nation's resources to education, health, and culture. But nothing will be devoted to rent, interest, and profit, nothing to provide incomes for those "who toil not neither do they spin." This is indeed the pattern of things in those countries which

have established socialism. It is on this system that the first socialist country, Russia, organized her series of Five-Year Plans.

In Russia the planned economy in the early Five-Year Plans embodied a deliberate choice of *priorities*. First things came first, and therefore there was concentration on industrialization and a restriction of consumption.* But high in the list of priorities came education, health, and culture.

As socialist development proceeded, the priorities changed. Consumption goods moved up, and there could be more leisure. The forced pace of the early stages of industrialization could then be relaxed.

THE U.S.S.R. IN CONSTRUCTION

It should hardly be necessary in our day to take seriously statements about Soviet Russia alleging poverty, backwardness, and unrest. Yet such statements are still made. "Poverty, discontent and shortages dog both Russia and China," says Thomas Griffith in *The Waist-High Culture*. "Russia has not yet provided even a minimum standard of living for its people." George Palozi Horvath in his recent book *Khrushchev: The Road to Power* still talks about the imminence of internal revolution and a violent change of the regime.

But increasingly expert opinion, and the testimony of even the most critical observers, points in the opposite direc-

* The extraordinary thing is that in China the tremendous program of industrialization has been accomplished by a rise in the standard of living.

tion.* The Oxford economist Peter Wiles, who declares that he has no sympathy whatever with socialism, in reporting on his personal investigations,¹ says that the rate of growth of productivity is higher in the Soviet Union than in any non-socialist country at the period of its maximum development. The annual increase is 9 percent compared with 3 percent in the United States and 1.5 percent in Great Britain. He attributes this rapid advance to "Communist industrial efficiency" and to the increase in Soviet output per man-hour, which is rising at the rate of 7.5 percent *per annum*. Another factor to which he draws attention is the failure of capitalism ever to produce to capacity (owing to lack of effective demand). Unused capacity is particularly characteristic of the U.S. economy.

Wiles denies that this rapid industrialization is today at the expense of consumption. "Manufactured goods are comparatively cheap and plentiful and the supply of them grows rapidly. . . . Consumption is growing very fast. It is no mean achievement to have halved the cost of living since 1947 while raising wages."

Turning from the industrial basis to the field of education and culture, the former Minister of Education (Lord Hailsham), addressing the London Head Teachers' Associa-

* In a television debate (September 1960) between the rival candidates for the Presidency of the United States, Senator Kennedy accepted without question the immense achievements of the U.S.S.R. and made the necessity for America to deal with its own social evils and to increase its productivity, lest it be rapidly outdistanced by the Soviet economy, the keynote of his policy. This is a remarkable change from the general assumption only a few years ago that Russia was still a backward country, that socialism had failed, and that capitalism was its indisputable superior.

tion, said that 760,000 technical specialists were graduating each year in Russia. They are producing 280 graduate engineers per million of the population compared with 136 in the United States and 57 in Britain. The Russians, said Lord Hailsham, were spending 80 gold dollars per person a year on education compared with 56 in the United States and 26 in Britain. Other investigations have drawn attention to the fact that Soviet technical students receive over 2,000 hours of non-scientific education in what we would call the liberal arts, while their graduates stand higher in qualifications on the average than the British.

Russia has over 7,500,000 children engaged in full secondary education over the age of 15, compared with 350,000 in Britain. In proportion to the population five times as many children in Russia continue their education after 15 than in Britain. Russia has also devoted, even in its most difficult days, considerable resources to the building of hospitals, sanatoria, holiday homes, health centers, and medical stations in mines and factories. Summer camps on a large scale have been organized for school children. Large sums have been allocated to the theatre, to the publication of books, to libraries, to the education of artists, musicians, and to music. Culture has not been forgotten.²

These achievements do not mean that in housing, clothes, washing machines, and the kind of goods we can purchase freely in Woolworth's or the department stores, the Soviet Union is yet up to Britain or the United States, though

it is making astonishing progress in this direction. But if the average Russian is not so well off in consumer goods as the better-paid workers of the United States and Britain, he is better educated.* And Russia is a very healthy country, with an excellent record for looking after its children, its old people and its workers—and there is no one else to look after.

THE QUESTION OF PRIORITIES

It is only when the community owns all the economic resources and is operating them for the common good that these achievements become possible. Under capitalism money is invested only where it will pay—a block of luxury apartments will have precedence over working-class dwellings. If much-needed goods cannot be produced profitably, then, although labor and raw material and machines are available, they will not be produced. If what has been produced cannot be sold profitably, then, however much it may be needed, it will be destroyed, as wheat and coffee and cotton and milk were destroyed in the economic crisis of the thirties, and indeed are being destroyed today.

In a world where two-thirds of the population are underfed, \$8-billion worth of surplus grain is being stored in the United States.³ The Science Correspondent of *The Observer*

* Recent neutral observers are now saying with some confidence that the general standard of life in Russia is as high or almost as high as that of the average British worker.

declared that "It is impossible to move the food surpluses of the West to the impoverished East without upsetting the market."⁴

A recent inquiry into the needs of African agriculture points out that the assistance needed is unlikely to be provided by capitalist enterprise because it cannot be expected to pay dividends. An immense amount of money is required to raise African agriculture, which must for many years remain peasant agriculture, even to a bare subsistence level. At present its crop yields are the lowest in the world. Seventy-three percent of the African people are still dependent on the soil in spite of mining and such industrialization as there is. In British African territories 85 percent of the gross domestic produce is agricultural.

With adequate fertilization, ploughs, and tractors instead of hoes, and some irrigation, the crop yields could easily be doubled. Even Sir Roy Welensky, in the B.B.C.'s *Face to Face* program, was compelled to admit that what the people of Nyasaland needed above all things was "a decent standard of living, a bellyfull of food and a place to live in." There are, in fact, two million Africans in Nyasaland whose standard of living is no more than \$45 a year. Neither British rule nor the Welensky government has been able to provide a decent standard of living, and yet by a curious logic he argues that this is a good reason for the continuation of British domination if Nyasaland is to have "a decent life in the future."

But where is the capital to come from? Peasant agriculture is a field in which private foreign investment has no part. What is needed are subsidies to meet fertilizer and tractor costs, and grants-in-aid of such major capital works as irrigation. But since the sole return would be the welfare of the Africans, not dividends, not even interest on the money thus obtained, Western capitalism is likely to do little on these terms. And it is doing little; for the whole period 1960-64 the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund promises a sum which is less than four-fifths of one year's subsidies to British agriculture.

Our civilization is based on money values and subordinates human needs to the mechanical operation of the laws of supply and demand. "The primary object of any system of production," says the Imperial Chemical Industries *Bulletin*, "is to make money—that has been the excuse for, and explanation of, industry." Thus money, not human welfare, not the value of the individual, not the common good, becomes the final criterion, the ultimate standard. The question is not how we shall allocate our resources to do the most good, but "does it pay?" Thus it is that we get these two results: on the one hand a rich country, its shops packed with luxury goods, but its education and health services starved, and little to spare for the advance of its backward territories; on the other hand a country like Russia, utilizing all its resources in a planned fashion to increase its own production and also that of its former colonial terri-

tories, giving a high priority to health and education and putting luxury in the second place and incomes divorced from useful labor nowhere.

THE PRICE OF VICTORY

"The price of progress is trouble," as a well-known statesman said recently. The transition from a capitalist to a socialist world is the most complete revolution that has occurred in human history and it is hardly likely to be a painless one. That does not mean that those who take the responsibility of supporting such an advance are either regardless of the cost or unscrupulous as to the means. In fact, the cost in human lives of leaving things as they are is immense, and the cost of resisting change with violence, as it always has been resisted, is far greater than the cost of revolution. As to disregard of moral scruples, capitalism has no superiority in that respect.

But trouble certainly lies ahead and for very many the victory of socialism may seem not to be worth the price paid, especially if it is to be socialism *now*. Better fall back on the inevitability of gradualism and hope and pray for socialism tomorrow at a lower cost in blood and tears.

This is not the place to discuss the full economic implications of this issue, but three considerations should perhaps be advanced.

1. It may be more necessary than the gradualists think to effect the change to socialism before things get much worse.

In spite of the existence of areas of considerable prosperity, capitalism is failing to advance the backward areas of the world, and the victory of socialism, or even the rise of nationalism, in these areas will present a serious threat to its economic stability.

2. Evolution and revolution are not alternatives. There are indeed long periods of evolutionary advance, but they prepare the way for, and are never an alternative to, the moment of radical transition. This is upon us and cannot be avoided.

3. Gradualism, under these circumstances, tends more and more to the postponement of all radical social change to which capitalism will not consent. It implies acquiescence in whatever steps business finds necessary in times of crisis to keep industry going—be it deflation with accompanying unemployment, national economies in education and the social services, intensified foreign competition, with the necessary wage cuts to lower prices, even in the last resort, war, if that is the only way to economic survival. Thus postponement of social change may be disastrous even though facing it may be costly.

Other countries have already made the transition. What can we learn from them? Russia has achieved much, but what is the price she has paid? We are told that its government is barbarous, tyrannical, and wholly undemocratic, that its method of establishing socialism was heedless of humanity and truth, that its people are even now seething with discontent—in the words of General Bedell-Smith: “a

cowed and terrified population held down by the bayonets of thousands of uniformed [*sic*] secret police."

If this were indeed the case one might hesitate before, even in the interests of human emancipation, we adopted such an alternative to capitalism.

ON A CERTAIN BLINDNESS IN HUMAN BEINGS

In the first place one does not have to excuse, even if one regrets the necessity of, a measure of repression which we find in every revolution—even those which are now accepted as thoroughly respectable. But on the other hand there were features of the Russian Revolution (as there have been of every revolution) which are neither to be excused nor defended, and these excesses were increased rather than diminished in the later years of Stalin; innocent people were framed, imprisoned and shot; the police became an independent power, no longer answerable to any higher authority; there was, in certain sections of the population, though probably not among the rank and file, an atmosphere which made it impossible for people to speak their minds and to discuss freely. All this was not only regrettable, it was indefensible and did untold harm. All this must be sharply distinguished from the inevitable birth-pangs of a new society.

The early stages of the transition to socialism were painful, but in counting the cost and deciding whether the price paid was too high much depends on the point of view. Of course if we regard the end as undesirable then the sacrifices

will appear indefensible. But if the end is an immense increase in human happiness and escape from social collapse then, even at a considerable cost, more may have been gained than has been lost.

There is a psychological factor here of some importance. Few of us are imaginative enough to see the needs of others as vividly as we recognize our own or to realize the cost in human misery of maintaining a social system by which we profit. Therefore the deprivation of privilege may appear an outrage to be resisted in the name of morality, and the minority thus threatened is unlikely to be conjured into amity or convinced either by facts or logic. It will use whatever means are most convenient to maintain its rights, and will seek to justify them by the most plausible arguments it can manage to devise. One has to accept the fact that people are honestly convinced of the righteousness of the oppression by which they profit, but is that any reason why they should be allowed to continue it?

BLEEDING HEARTS

Those who appear to be greatly distressed at the lives lost in establishing socialism are nevertheless prepared to defend the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, when 150,000 men, women and children were killed without warning, and accept the necessity of the Kenya suppression with its 80,000 Africans in concentration camps and thousands of deaths by battle and execution.

While asserting the inviolability of the principles of freedom and denouncing their repudiation in the Communist world, members of parliament accept Britain's security measures, the tapping of telephones, the opening of correspondence, the secret inquiries, on the grounds, to quote the government statement, that "it is right to continue the practice of tilting the balance in favor of offering greater protection to the security of the state rather than in the direction of safeguarding the rights of the individual."

Marx said very truly that:

"... the greater the development of antagonisms between the growing forces of production and the extant social order, the more does the ideology of the ruling class become permeated with hypocrisy. In addition the more effectively life unveils the mendacious character of this ideology, the more does the language used by the dominant class become sublime and virtuous."⁵

Events have blown the lid off South Korea, where Syngman Rhee had exercised a thinly veiled dictatorship since 1948. Every informed journalist and government official both in England and in the United States was well aware of the fact that Rhee was imprisoning his political opponents and had set up a police state, but not a word was spoken, not a line to this effect appeared in the press. Syngman Rhee, armed and financed by the United States from the end of the war in 1945, to the crossing of the frontier between North and South Korea, never ceased to advocate the

invasion and conquest of North Korea; nor had he ceased to advocate it and prepare for it since the Armistice. It was his huge American-equipped army of 400,000 that was responsible for the growing unrest, leading to the now openly acknowledged rigged elections of 1960 and open revolt.

What is so significant is the sudden change of front once the State Department could carry its suppression of the facts no further. The entire press then expressed shocked surprise and strong condemnation of what, in fact, it had known all along and carefully concealed.

WHERE IS THE FREE WORLD?

This is no solitary example. The same mistaken policy and the same concealment of the facts was seen in the case of Chiang Kai-shek's China, until at last General Marshall's report revealed the ruthless dictatorship, the corruption and misappropriation of funds, and the consequent revolt of all the democratic and genuinely nationalist forces in China against him.

The "Free World," with its profession of democracy, its love of the individual, its threatened Christian values, has, through the whole period of the Cold War, maintained and supported with arms and money the most reactionary regimes anywhere in the world. Denouncing Communist countries for tyranny, the denial of democratic rights and suppression of freedom of speech, and describing the condition of their

people as one of miserable poverty, it has maintained a cynical and callous disregard of exactly these conditions elsewhere; it has given full military and economic support to the Shah of Persia, to King Feisal, to Chiang Kai-shek, to the dictator of South Vietnam, to Franco, and Salazar, the dictator of Portugal. It has excused, played down, or ignored the imprisonment of the most respected liberal journalists and the suppression of the free press in Turkey. Everything it denounces as Communist tyranny the "Free World" has itself carried out or accepted without protest in Africa, in Cuba under Batista, in half a dozen South American dictatorships.

The poverty which makes the hearts of the defenders of the "Free World" bleed when they profess to find it in Russia leaves them unmoved in their own backyard.

On the other hand the facts revealing the steady advance of China and of course the U.S.S.R., the real social achievements of Rumania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary are suppressed, and no inkling is allowed to reach the public of the tremendous advances in the former oppressed colonial territories of Russia, now the Republics of Soviet Asia, where industrial, agricultural, educational, medical, and cultural advances have taken them as far as Russia itself and completely wiped out the misery of Czarist times.

WHEN CIRCUMSTANCES ALTER CASES

Those who speak of the "Free World" tend to adopt one point of view for Kenya, Cyprus, British Guiana, Palestine,

and India (before their freedom was won), and the opposite point of view over Russia and Hungary. They suppress popular movements in Greece and Jordan and Syria and Egypt and Persia, they applaud what they believe to be a popular revolutionary uprising in Hungary.

The reason is obvious, it is not a question of "liberal principles" at all, but of *their valuation of the end*. Those who disapprove of the end, socialism, invoke "principles" to condemn the means taken to defend it. If they approve to the end, the maintenance of their strategic position and prestige in Cyprus, in Africa or whatever it may be, then this end itself justifies the means necessary to achieve it, and no principle must stand in the way. Life is sacred when those who are killed are on "our" side; life is not sacred when we execute terrorists or shoot Africans trying to escape or found carrying arms.

The United States is indignant about "indirect aggression" while boasting of spending hundreds of thousands of dollars in stirring up subversive movements in Eastern Europe, by *The Voice of America* (Radio), by leaflets, by agents, by economic pressure. The United States Government regarded themselves as entitled to send their planes over Soviet territory on reconnaissance flights, as in war, and declared that they intended to continue to do so. This was excused on the grounds that all countries employ spies—but all countries do not send aircraft over each other's territories, which is a flagrant breach of international law and would, of course, be

treated as such if Soviet reconnaissance planes flew over the United States.

The horrors of the Algerian War, the immense loss of lives, the tortures described in Henry Alleg's *La Question*, have aroused the indignation of all liberal-minded people and troubled the consciences of many others, but the chorus of denunciation which greets anything of this kind in the Soviet camp is never heard, no NATO statesman makes public protest or calls for a day of prayer for the victims of French imperialism.

Is all this hypocrisy? Or do circumstances alter cases? If the latter is the answer, then the whole question of whether Communist practice is consistent with the rights of the individual or with morality depends *not* on whether there is or has been imprisonment without trial, or coercion, or violence, since clearly these are *not* regarded as in principle impermissible, but *on what is considered of first importance*. Critics of Communism may invoke "principles" of political liberty, but since these are not maintained when the interests they value are at stake, it is not really the "principles" that are decisive. One remembers how legality and constitutionalism were ignored by Britain and France when Franco, aided by Fascist Germany and Italy, rose in revolt against the Spanish government, on the grounds that parliamentary democracy could only be permitted so long as it maintained the rights of property, i.e., so long as it maintained capitalism. As Mr. Churchill put it at the time: "It is idle to claim that a constitutional and parliamentary regime is legally and

morally entitled to the obedience of all classes," when it threatens property rights.

IS COMPULSION EVER JUSTIFIED?

It would seem, therefore, to depend on the point of view. While compulsion is roundly condemned when exercised by revolutionary governments it is always sanctioned when ruling class interests are threatened or if some cause which enlists devotion is in peril.

When Hitler was defeated, the Potsdam Agreement secured the total suppression of the Nazi Party, its press and its propaganda. If a revolt had broken out in West Germany with the purpose of restoring the Nazi regime, we should all have supported measures to put it down.

But a revolt in Hungary, a former fascist dictatorship and a former enemy country, and therefore, like Germany, still under military occupation, must not be suppressed, although no informed person would question the fact that its success would have been followed by a regime that would speedily have brought the reactionaries to power.

Every struggle for freedom has required coercion in order to establish and preserve its victories. This is not felt to be inconsistent with the freedom fought for by such men as Milton and Locke, and later by Washington and Lincoln.

The real question, then, is not one of principle, but of differing judgments as to who is right in the particular case. Those who see the necessity of coercing striking African miners in Rhodesia do not see the necessity of coercing land-

lords in Hungary or Poland. They may be indignant at the absence of freedom of speech in Russia, but indifferent to or ready to excuse its subversion in the United States.

"How much freedom is there in the United States to get one's opinions into the popular press when it is the owners and political groups who control it who determine which persons, which facts, which version of the facts, and which ideas shall reach the public?"⁶

Marxists do not advocate the use of violence; no one in his right mind does. Every sensible person desires the achievement of socialism by peaceful means, and this is far more likely in Britain than it ever was in Russia; but Marxists warn that working-class attempts to enforce the will of the majority for necessary change may be met by the resistance of the owning class who will themselves resort to force to maintain their "rights."

The use of compulsion by a constitutionally elected socialist government is surely justified as a means of preventing its overthrow by the counter-revolutionary use of force on the part of the dispossessed capitalists.

MEANS AND ENDS

Even though this may be so, there are legitimate grounds for the gravest reluctance to proceed to extreme measures. These should be resorted to only if the failure to do so is certain to lead in the long run to even more suffering that if strong measures are taken. There is no more responsible

decision that any statesmen could be called upon to make, and there is no foolproof rule to ensure that he never makes a mistake.

This does not mean that violence is chosen by socialists as a speedier method, or that it is adopted without hesitation as though in a good cause any means are justified. That may have been said about other causes but it has never been said by any socialist or any Marxist. It was not a Bolshevik but a speaker for Western idealism, defending the atrocities in Cyprus, who said: "If a country decides to use its army to execute policy it can hardly be shocked if a little brutality and licentiousness occurs by the wayside."

Moreover, whenever violence or suppression of free speech have to be accepted, the good that is achieved is inevitably diminished and the evil consequences will be difficult to overcome. This must always be taken into account. This is particularly so when for a long time it becomes necessary to control the free expression of opinion. It is not easy to return to open discussion even when that has become safe, and yet open discussion is the life-blood of honest thought and good administration.

It had always been known that iron discipline had been exercised in the control of Soviet Russia and the usual freedoms of speech and political propaganda severely curtailed; but progressives, so long accustomed to misrepresentations of everything Soviet, were not aware of the extent of these repressions (increasingly unnecessary) or the injustices involved, until these were revealed by the Communists them-

selves after Stalin's death. There is, however, no doubt that the long view of history will rank the achievements of the Soviet people under the leadership of Stalin very high, and that Stalin himself will assume his place among the greatest of revolutionary leaders.

What has never before happened in history is the frank confession of error, tyranny, and injustice by the government, the rehabilitation of the innocent and the steady, vigorous, and successful efforts to purge the country of police terror and illegality. When has any repressive government before so completely reversed its policy and frankly admitted its errors?

The Communist Party under Stalin came to occupy an inferior position to the Stalin administration, as indeed did the state organization itself. Both the party and the state are now restored to their rightful places and the result, as is already apparent, is very rapid progress in the direction of legality and constitutionalism.

The "withering away of the state" is by no means an abandoned theory. But it requires not only those internal developments which have already cleared the way to this end, but an international situation in which genuine coexistence has been accepted and war made impossible.

WHEN PRACTICE FALLS SHORT OF THEORY

In no human society will practice march in complete line with theory. The discrepancy may be due to the impossibility

of the demands as, for instance, the impossibility of practicing the Christian ethic under capitalism; or it may be due to an inevitable falling short in attempting a practicable but difficult task.

Where socialist practice does not come up to theory this does not necessarily condemn the theory, but those who accept the theory and fail to practice it. In that case we should not ask socialists to abandon their faith, but to be better socialists.

The fact is that critics tend to stress the evils involved in the struggle for socialism while imagining themselves to be much better than they really are. All human efforts everywhere, however noble the aim, are marred by man's imperfection, by ambition, cruelty, and injustice. We are usually aware of this and do not carry to excess blame for such shortcomings in our own war effort, or in the great historic struggles of past history. But while excusing ourselves we judge others by quite unattainable standards. The question, however, is not whether the aim has been attained with perfectly clean hands—no such victory has ever been won by mortal man—but whether the good achieved outweighs the evil which has been involved.

THE ERROR OF PERFECTIONISM

The criticism of the evils inevitably involved in the struggle for socialism springs from a perfectionism which will accept no achievement that is sullied by any violence at all,

or is associated with any kind of moral shortcoming, an abnormal moral sensitivity which turns even friends of socialism into enemies, and is shocked and alienated by the shortcomings and excesses of those who have shouldered revolutionary responsibilities.

This is an immoral, not a moral attitude. Without for a moment condoning crimes and excesses, it should be declared that carping at the defects of the progressive cause in effect gives help to reaction. It may produce a glow of self-righteousness, but it indicates a failure to recognize the duty to do the best we can.

Simple moralists are always trying to persuade us that we have no right to contend against a virulent form of evil because there are defects in ourselves, or because truth and justice are not *perfectly* represented by our cause. But responsible men will not require the illusion of guiltlessness to nerve them in the struggle against evil.

In actual life we are seldom, if ever, presented with a situation in which unalloyed virtue is on one side and pure wickedness on the other, nor is it either responsible or sensible or moral to refuse all action that falls short of perfection. The situation before us permits no alternative of this kind and we cannot withdraw from it and demand a different one where we will be confronted with no such dilemma. All we can do is to consider as best we can the consequences of alternative courses and, balancing gains against losses, do what is necessary to avoid the most evil and achieve the greatest good.

No one is exonerating the crimes of revolutionaries but trying to understand that while they must always be condemned, and the good achieved will thereby be diminished, it is not high-mindedness to refuse to pay the price of victory.

Idealists and political critics do not always realize that history is a rough affair. The men who make it become legendary heroes, but when the tumult and the shouting dies they are seen for what they were and what they really did, and they are seldom saints. All that we can say is that in spite of the mixed motives and imperfections and injustices and cruelties which have marred every great movement of history, yet it *was* movement, and in the right direction. We may diminish these evils and should do so, with all earnestness, but we cannot hope to eliminate them. It is not righteousness but irresponsibility and worse to refuse to participate in such struggles in order to keep our own souls clean, come what may to the world which needs our help.

DICTATORSHIP IN DISSOLUTION

Not all dictatorship perpetuates itself and is irremediable. It depends on the forces which brought it into being and still more on the measures it adopts.

The Russian Revolution could not immediately give either political freedom or an endless supply of consumption goods. It could not dispense with Communist Party leadership, discipline, imposed sacrifices, authority. But it used these to set in motion developments which would increasingly make such constraints less necessary.

As capitalization increased so the possibility of increased consumption drew nearer and has now been reached. With this must be taken the rapid growth of education, the awakening and training of millions to scientific thought, the wide responsibilities in every field, all of which make for self-respect, self-assurance, and a critical judgment.

It has been said that this is an alarming and unexpected result which fills the dictatorship with fear. There is no evidence for this; it is the capitalist critics who are surprised and taken aback at this development. The sincere party leader could only welcome it; he could certainly have expected nothing else, in view of the necessary effects of the policy he was supporting and more particularly because the Party never ceased to proclaim its democratic aims and the rights of every individual to freedom and self-fulfilment.

From the first the discipline imposed in Russia could be *seen* as leading to the establishing of the conditions of a wider freedom—freedom from want and care, freedom to work at the occupation for which men have the most aptitude, freedom to study and to develop one's capacities to the full, freedom from hardship, in illness and old age. Discipline was never arbitrary, never the maintenance of, but always the requirement of, a developing socialist society, and it has already abundantly justified itself. The more successful such discipline, the more it becomes unnecessary. Under such circumstances, the less possible does it become to continue it. Hence its relaxation today.

Stalin, whose great work tends to be undervalued today,

was a great creative statesman, however much he may have blundered in his later years. It is doubtful whether any less determined leadership would have laid the foundations of socialism. His own judgment on the course the U.S.S.R. took under his leadership is that:

“Though the path of industrialization is hard nevertheless it points toward the social goal. If you are going to build a house you must economize and make sacrifices. Even more is it true if you are building a new society. It is necessary for us temporarily to limit certain of our demands to accumulate the necessary resources. We have made this sacrifice with the definite objective of developing real freedom in the best sense of the term.”

If it is imagined that the vast schemes of industrialization, the ever-expanding apparatus of education and care for the public health, the expansion of mining, oil production, and cotton production, the opening up of huge new areas in Eastern Russia could have been carried out by pure coercion, no greater error could possibly be committed.

“What we build,” said Zhdanov, “cannot be built with passive people.” Socialism demands the whole-souled cooperation of the masses. Not alone opposition, but even indifference is fatal to it. Socialist construction has experienced its tragedies, its setbacks and its betrayals, but it has gone steadily forward because it has set free the energies and aroused the hope and faith of an entire people.

VII. THE NEW SOCIETY

A NEW CONCEPTION OF FREEDOM

"FOR SOME MEN," said Lincoln, "liberty means that each man does as he pleases with himself and the product of his labor. For others it is liberty for some men to do as they please with other men and the product of other men's labor."

Today socialists not only deny the freedom of men to do as they please with others and with the product of their labor as ultimately destructive of human liberty; they point the way to a new conception of freedom through social organization, and a new ethic which is not merely concerned with the good individual but with the good society, because it is the precondition to good individuals.

The ethical demands of society are only valid and can only be sure of ultimate acceptance by all if the "commonwealth" protects and promotes a truly human existence for all. Such a society is not an artificial construction, but arises when a developed industrialism makes possible and necessary an era of mass consumption. The excuse of scarcity, which has been used to justify repression and exploitation, weakens as man's knowledge and control over nature enhances the means for fulfilling human needs with minimum of toil.

The rational organization of a fully developed industrial

society after the conquest of scarcity requires a classless society and an economy of planned production not for profit but for consumption. Only in such a society will it be possible to reach the condition of mutual dependence and fellowship. Such a community is natural, it is indeed the natural extension and fulfilment of human personality. Man's nature as it develops in a society of equals makes him desire only to be treated as one among others and "the general good speaks with warm compulsion in every heart."¹

SELF-DETERMINATION

Even in the necessarily imperfect form which such a society takes in its early stages it will have a strength and unity unknown in our divided and anarchic capitalist world, not only as a new social order, but because of the personal faith of its members. Whatever the cynics may say, detached observers of the Socialist Soviet Union are increasingly impressed by the people's widespread faith in the meaning of their lives in marked contrast to the doubts and confusion of the Western world; they have superb self-confidence, with firm ground under their feet, for they know that their existence is secure and that all ways of development are open to them.

Both Lenin and Marx looked forward to and worked for a society in which men should freely unite, self-determination coinciding with the public interest, as Kant and Rousseau believed it should and might be. Thus Lenin, in *The*

State and Revolution, declared that all coercion and forced subordination is to "wither away completely when society has realized the formula: 'From each according to his ability; to each according to his needs'; that is, when people have become accustomed to observe the fundamental principles of social life, and their labor is so productive that they will voluntarily work *according to their abilities*." At this stage "people will gradually become accustomed to the observation of the elementary rules of social life, known for centuries, repeated for thousands of years in all sermons. They will become accustomed to their observance without force, without constraint, without subjection, without the special apparatus for compulsion which is called the State."

Nor do Marxists wish to impose an iron dogma on the human mind, regardless of the right of private judgment. As Lenin says: "We do not want anything to be accepted with the eyes shut, to be an article of faith. Everyone should keep his head tight on his own shoulders, and think out and verify everything for himself."²

This can only be achieved when by the actual structure and functioning of society the welfare of the individual is secured and not denied. The antithesis between the individual and society which we assume to be inherent in social life as such is actually inherent only in class societies, that is to say societies in which some men live by the labor of others, claiming all that they produce in excess of the wages paid to

them. When this is overcome we shall no longer regard the interests of individuals and society as necessarily antagonistic.

A FAITH TO LIVE BY

In working for and achieving such a form of society socialism preserves and advances all that is healthy and sound in former teaching about the individual personality and its development. It is for this reason that its moral claims are one of the strongest elements in its appeal, embodying as they do not only the whole of the ideal society as set forth by the prophets of socialism from Saint-Simon and Robert Owen to William Morris, but the whole of that common morality of service, kindness, truthfulness, and pity which Christians and others have preached in vain for thousands of years, and all those ideals for the full development of the individual which have suffered so disconcerting a defeat in the Western world.

The creed of socialism appeals also as a scientific system which claims to have the key to the understanding of society, and thus to be the heir to modern Western civilization. It supplies a consistent world view and a cause worth fighting for. To the frustrated and exploited colonial peoples it offers release from Western domination but at the same time hands on the best that Western thought has produced.

To the peasant in his poverty it offers the possibility of a future created by man where not only a few are rich. To

workers under capitalism, who are frustrated both by the contrast between their incomes and those of other members of society, and by the lack of status implied in the relationship of master and man in a free enterprise economy, it offers a present place in struggle and future status as a reward.

Such a society will not only make it possible to fulfil the older morality but will itself evolve new standards of co-operative living, and develop new responsibilities. For within an economic system based on private interest the range of social obligation is limited. Socialism cannot exist without voluntarily accepting the social bonds of a higher order, its aim lies far beyond the present stage of socialist development.

Marx well says:

"In a higher phase of Communist Society, after labor has become not merely a means to live but is in itself the first necessity of living, after the powers of production have also increased and all the springs of co-operative wealth are gushing more freely together with the all-round development of the individual, then and then only can the narrow bourgeois horizon of rights be left far behind and society will inscribe on its banners, 'From each according to his capacity, to each according to his need'."³

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